

BCAN
Homeless Forum
City Road Baptist Church
18 September 2003

Introduction

Steve Abbott welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer.

Those Present

Steve Abbott (BCAN), Peter Bruce (Easton Salvation Army), Pippa Chappell (elim@bristol), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), Val Moore (Christ Church, Clifton), Kevin Stone (Candle Project, Salvation Army) and Graham Wheeler (Bristol Soup Run Trust).

Peter Bruce from Easton Salvation Army was welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies Received

Apologies had been received from Anni Davey (Crisis Centre Ministries), Ailsa McWilliam (Caring at Christmas), Clive Richards (Trinity Tabernacle), Mark Stonham (Redland Parish Church), Paul Tipler (Aspire) and Betty Wear (Saint Nicholas of Tolentino).

Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous two meetings had been posted at the end of August. However, neither Pippa nor Kevin had received them. The notes were approved without change.

Matters Arising

The new BHF email list is up and running, and seems to be functioning well. Paul is happy to answer any questions about it.

Kevin had not given Paul details of the Candle Project to circulate with the notes of the previous meeting. He will try to do this for the next meeting.

It was requested that action points in the meeting notes should be made more prominent. Paul agreed to make an effort to do this.

Action: Kevin

Action: Paul

Information Share

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army in Hassell Drive started their Monday morning breakfast run in 1993. Since then the population has changed greatly, but in many ways the problems are no different. Peter has a part-time role overseeing the weekly programme. There is an ongoing problem with maintaining some of the activities because the volunteers are aging and finding

it difficult to cope.

BSRT

The Bristol Soup Run Trust was formed in 1987. They are currently missing two Thursday evenings each month, and looking for groups and volunteers to fill that gap.

There have been some complaints about the Soup Runs visiting cashpoint machines. This has happened in the past, because these are 'good' locations for begging, but the people doing the Soup Runs have been told not to stop to feed people by cashpoint machines, so this should not be a problem any more.

The question was asked whether there is any way for the different Soup Runs to communicate with each other about where they find people, or the precise route taken by the various Soup Runs. Graham said that the people on each Soup Run would keep a record of where they went and maybe how many people they fed at each location, but this information was not passed on to a central location.

(It was also noted that Graham Simms is a member of Counterslip Baptist church. He and Graham Wheeler used to work together.)

BEAT

There has been some encouraging feedback: various people think that the basic idea is a good one. However, it seems that there is already a project being planned along these lines, so it is unlikely that we could secure funding for a pilot project at present. This, of course, could change.

CCM

The Wild Goose coffee shop is open again at 12 City Road. The open evening to mark the reopening and the new kitchen had been a tremendous success, and the Lord Mayor had spoken very warmly about the importance of places like the coffee shop and the role of the voluntary sector in Bristol.

Elim@Bristol

Elim@Bristol are hiring the St Pauls Sports Academy while the building work is underway. They plan to start a food bank. They will ask for food to be donated. Access will be through social workers and doctors giving vouchers, not directly to homeless people. The basic idea is to help people with a short-term food crisis, such as someone moving into a flat and waiting for their first giro to come through. The project is still in the planning stage, and there is no target date for starting yet.

Training

Volunteer Training

The monthly training programme has started again, along the lines agreed at the last meeting. About half the people present signed up for the whole series. The numbers were

adequate, but not brilliant: we need to publicise these sessions better.

Paul can produce the basic information, but cannot design attractive leaflets, and does not have the time to publicise the training more widely. Does anyone know someone who has the skills or time to help with this?

Action: Everyone

First Aid

Paul has produced a draft leaflet advertising the First Aid training in November, but has not been able to confirm the details yet. He should be able to send out copies around the middle of next week. Please let him know if you want some.

Action: Everyone

Developing the BCAN Homeless Forum

Membership

To date, neither BCAN nor the BCAN Homeless Forum have a membership. Both maintain a mailing list, but people (and organisations) do not join or leave. There was support for the idea of introducing a membership for the BHF.

Paul said he has been thinking about proposing a two-tier membership scheme, as there are a number of people and organisations that regularly take part in the meetings, and a much wider group that appreciate the information and resources provided by the BHF but cannot play an active role. There was general support for this idea, and for the principle of charging an annual membership fee.

Paul will draft a proposal for the next meeting about a membership scheme which could be implemented in the new year.

Action: Paul

Paul asked everyone to think about the idea of membership fees, and what level would be fair for both active and 'non-active' members.

Action: Everyone

Other Thoughts

It was noted that a formal membership could assist BHF members in sharing information of a confidential nature. It would certainly help if any shared confidentiality policy says that the information is held by the BHF rather than the member organisation.

The question was raised about producing and distributing a BHF newsletter. We need to get wider feedback on this idea. Paul said again that producing publicity is not one of his gifts, and we would need some volunteers to make this happen. Do we know anyone who could help with this?

Action: Everyone

Other Business

Mental Health

There was some discussion of the problems of helping people with mental health issues.

There was a general feeling that we need more information, so that we will have a better idea what resources are available to help these people. Also, we need to know where we can refer people to, and how to do it. A CPN is now visiting the Bristol Methodist Centre.

The Emergency Duty Team ('EDT') will, in an emergency, arrange accommodation for people when The Hub is closed – at the weekend, for instance.

Events and Notices

Steve asked if anyone was interested in attending the Supported Housing Forum on behalf of BCAN. He has the details if anyone would like to know more.

Action: Everyone

There is a service celebrating the new Alabaré homes this coming Sunday (21 September) at St Nicholas of Tolentino, starting at 5:30. Val Jeal will be speaking, so it should be an excellent event.

The next BCAN meeting will be on Thursday 16 October, from 12 noon to 2 pm in Trinity Tabernacle. The speaker will be Michael Bellfield. Everyone is welcome.

The next St Agnes Community Workers' Lunch will be held on 13 November, from 12:30 to 2 pm in the meeting room at St Agnes. You do not have to be a professional to attend: anyone who is involved in working in the community is welcome to attend.

Shared Documents

The usual set of documents were made available for people to look at and pick up:

- [Volunteer Training 2003-2004](#) – BCAN and CCM
- [Information about the Volunteer Training 2003-2004](#) – 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
- [Communities of Practice](#) – BHF
- [Bristol Employment Action Team \('BEAT'\)](#) - 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 (www.crisis-centre.org.uk).

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 13 November 2003, 15 January 2004 and 18 March 2004: all at City Road Baptist Church between 7:30 and 9:00 pm.