

**BCAN**  
**Homeless Forum**  
Candle Community Project  
12 May 2005

## **Introduction**

Everyone present was welcomed to the meeting.

### ***Those Present***

Ailsa McWilliam (Caring at Christmas), Andrew Street (FareShare), David Perry (Emmaus Bristol), John Knuckley (Carmel Christian Centre), Julie Griffiths (Julian Trust), Kevin Stone (Salvation Army Candle Community Project), Martin Painter (Neighbourhood & Housing Services, BCC), Michaela Fudge-Quinlen (Self Help Community Housing, St Pauls), Nat Selman (Business in the Community), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), Susanna Misson-Williams (Hope Chapel) and Tim Bainbridge (Cold Weather Group).

### ***Apologies Received***

Anni Davey (Crisis Centre Ministries), John Atkinson (Bristol City Council), Julian Marsh (BCAN), Paul Tipler (Aspire), Sibylle Kort (NCH Bristol Nightstop) and Val Jeal (One25).

### ***Previous Meeting***

Paul confirmed that in respect of the Membership he had now received signed forms and money from 11 groups. There are now 10 full members and 1 associate member. It was noted that no receipts had yet been sent out to the groups who had paid and this would be looked into and receipts would be sent out. A full list of the members is now available from Paul.

Candle Community Centre: Kevin Stone confirmed it is certainly worth contacting UWE Building Services Department for duvets and other bedding that students have left behind. They want an outlet and are looking to set up storage and so it would be good to network now.

## **AGM**

No accounts are available as we are starting the first year and there has been no BHF money up to now. Paul has a draft budget if people are interested in a copy.

The Steering Group members were elected as follows: Paul Tipler (Aspire), Ailsa McWilliam (Caring at Christmas), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre) and David Perry (Emmaus).

## **FareShare**

Andrew Street gave a short presentation. FareShare is an independent charity, which was originally part of Crisis (the national homelessness charity, originally Crisis at Christmas). The current FareShare board is comparatively new. FareShare's central mission is seen as supporting communities to help relieve food poverty.

Andrew Street is an environmental consultant, and came across FareShare and their program of intercepting food going to waste in that context. He saw their broader activities and it gripped his attention. He has been on the FareShare board for two or three months.

FareShare have identified Bristol as an area in which they would like to see a FareShare franchise operate. This however will only work if people in Bristol can be found who share the same vision and can co-operate with others to make it work. There is no reason for it not to work in Bristol: we have both the opportunity and the need.

The aims of Fare Share are the relief of poverty and preservation and promotion of good nutrition and health among people who are suffering from social, economic or emotional distress by:

- a. minimising food waste;
- b. supporting people by working in partnership with local organisations to provide access to quality food and other services; and
- c. providing opportunity for people to improve health and well being and a chance for volunteers to contribute to local communities.

There are six large, centre-based FareShare franchises operating at present, and three more operating a van-based model in West London, West Yorkshire and Manchester.

Andrew provided some basic background information.

Poverty:

- Poverty has not deepened but has broadened in recent years.
- 4 million plus people cannot afford a healthy life style.
- 1 in 7 million people are over 65 and are at serious risk of malnourishment.
- 6.7 million live on a low income, which results in food poverty.

Poor diet:

- The Government spend £2.4 million on malnutrition and related diseases each year.
- The fresh fruit consumption of an average large poor family is equivalent to a quarter of an apple a day.
- Diseases such as heart conditions and diabetes are on the increase and there is an increased risk of these in areas of high poverty.

Management of waste:

- Disposal of waste directly into landfill is no longer sustainable.
- 17 million tonnes of waste is produced by the food sector each year, out of which 3.8 million tonnes has potential for recovery and consumption by humans and animals.

Fare Share is the only organisation to tackle these issues on a national scale.

Some figures:

- FareShare regularly work with over 100 companies in the food and drink industry.
- They distributed 2000 tonnes of “fit for purpose” food in 2004.
- They deliver food to some 150 “community member” projects across the country.
- They contributed food to some 3.3 million meals in 2004.
- 49% of recipient projects are hostels.
- 45% of all projects cater for homeless or ex homeless people.
- 21,000 people every day benefit from food from Fare Share.

Goals:

- To be a sustainable national food charity.
- To become the industry benchmark for responsible surplus food redistribution.
- To work in partnership with local organisations.

Andrew described a typical situation, when Sainsbury’s changed the corporate style of

food. They no longer sold the existing products, as they didn't have the new logo. Pallets of pasta and soup were no longer required and were taken by Fare Share. The food needs to have nutritional value, and obviously not be out of date.

When the Bristol franchise is set up, all the initial capital cost will be paid for by FareShare; the local franchise will have to cover the running costs – the vans, food storage, cold storage equipment, etc., and make it run as a viable franchise. FareShare will retain ownership of the capital items.

The franchise will need to obtain the necessary operational expenditure: for example, running the vans, leasing a warehouse and other running costs. A relatively low number of people are required. There will probably be an administrator / organiser who will be paid, but the majority of people required will be volunteers.

The estimated running costs are around £100,000 – £150,000 a year. This normally comes from fundraising, donations, trusts etc.

FareShare are putting pressure on the Government to minimise waste although the Government are finding it harder to see the advantages of recycling and diverting waste.

A concern was raised over whether FareShare operating in Bristol will mean that other food charities will have less food and resources. The answer to this was a definite “no”: the existence of Fare Share will not preclude the existence of existing relationships such as the one between M& S and Emmaus. The idea is for all groups to work together and to form partnerships with other groups.

A franchise in Birmingham is due to be set up within the next 6 – 9 months and, and FareShare hope that Bristol will open within the next 12 – 18 months. The next few months will be vital in looking at the details for Bristol.

### ***Bristol City Council***

Martin Painter from the Council gave a short presentation, taken from a longer presentation he uses to train people from the Hub and other places. He started with a short quiz and the answers to the following questions were given as follows:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
What is the population of Bristol?	400,000
How many council properties are there?	29,000 (65% are flats; of those, 60 – 65% are multi storey flats)
How many are sold each year?	500
How many new RSL properties are built each year?	About 250
How many people are on the waiting list?	18,000
How many are new applicants?	12,000
How many homeless applicants p.a?	3,000
How many acceptances are there p.a ?:	1,000 – 1,200
Most common reasons for homelessness?	Domestic violence, and being asked to leave by family and friends

The presentation contained a lot of detailed information about new developments and the Council's goals and aims, which is set out in a handout from the Bristol City Council Housing Options and Advice Service. Copies of this document can be obtained from Paul H.

## **Information Share**

### ***Bristol Soup Run Trust***

BSRT have got a new Treasurer. The main problem they are facing is recruiting enough volunteers for a Saturday night.

They have noticed a lot of new faces on the streets recently, and a number of regulars have dropped away: the average number they see is now around 30, where it used to be 50.

### ***Caring at Christmas***

The next edition of the Survival Handbook is overdue, and should be available in about a month to 6 weeks. Also, Ailsa is looking for volunteers for Caring in August. UWE are sending out emails asking for volunteers this summer, so she will try and tap into that.

### ***Candle Community Centre***

Kevin Stone is leaving his job with the Salvation Army to be an Associate Mental Health worker, but he wishes to retain contact with the Homeless Forum.

Apart from Kevin's departure, there are no problems to report. They have about 50 – 60 people turning up for food each session. On a Sunday they can have over 100 people for food. On Thursday afternoons between 2:30 and 5 pm there is a Job Centre Plus group where clients can get benefit and employment advice. This is open to anybody.

### ***Julian Trust***

They continue to be very busy and are very happy to network with other groups. They are not experiencing any problems at the moment and the atmosphere seems very good. It is their 20<sup>th</sup> year as a registered charity. They continue to accept people as they are.

### ***Business in the Community***

Unfortunately there was a poor turn out in April but they can take up to about 12 people per programme. An event called the "Power of Partnership" is taking place on 27 May in the Council House. There will be free professional support and advice and about 50 professional firms attending. If you need access to a free solicitor or accountant, please go along or contact Nat for more details.

### ***Emmaus***

They have 14 companions at present, with perhaps 3 or 4 more coming in the next few weeks. One companion has got a job in Bristol, and another has found a job in Spain.

Two of the companions are now community assistants and so have a supervisory role.

On Saturday 14 May there is a dinner dance and so the workshop will be closed in the afternoon.

Emmaus had 3 companions from Germany come over and visit, and one of theirs has visited as a direct swap. It was a great experience for all concerned and has developed links between the two communities. Business is good, and takings are up.

They are going to fêtes and fairs, and are involved in the Bristol Bike Ride.

## ***Cold Weather Group***

The night shelter is now closed, although it did stay open until April, as they were able to persuade the volunteers to help out. They had a high number of people moving into stable accommodation – full statistics for the last year will be available at the next meeting. They are now setting up and planning for next year now and the prospect of opening all year round.

## ***Homeless Forum***

The public launch of the Homeless Forum went well. People seemed to be impressed by the speakers and the event, which was encouraging. In hindsight we could have improved on the publicity side of things: we were wrong to assume the invitations would filter down to all the members of the organisations we invited.

From the feedback, it may be a good idea to do something similar next year: the event on the whole seemed to work very well, and it would be good to build on that success. If people have any thoughts or feedback on this subject, please let Paul know.

It was suggested that it would be good to get a list from some churches of all the organisations that might be interested in the Homeless Forum. The main difficulty with this idea is the manpower and time to implement it. BCAN have been trying to raise funds to employ someone, and this has been proving to be very difficult.

Training on a Wednesday evening and Saturday morning is going really well. They have good discussions, and Paul gets very positive feedback from the sessions. Perhaps more could be done to encourage more people to attend the next series, starting in September.

There is now money 'in the pot' from the organisations that have signed up and paid their membership fee. If people feel they would like to go on a course and could feed back the benefits to the whole group, please let Paul know.

## ***Crisis Centre Ministries***

Paul talked briefly about some problems CCM are having with one particular client. He encouraged the other organisations to help the man if possible, and said that CCM would do what it could to help anyone who was providing support to the client.

## **Usual Documents**

The usual documents were made available for people to look at and pick up. These are listed on the *Homeless Forum Documents* page of the BCAN web site: you can navigate from the BCAN home page (<http://www.bcan.org.uk>), or go directly to the page at [http://www.bcan.org.uk/bhf/12\\_homeless\\_docs.html](http://www.bcan.org.uk/bhf/12_homeless_docs.html); they are also available from the *Crisis Centre Ministries* office at 12 City Road.

## **Future Meetings**

The next meeting will be held on 14 July at the Caring at Christmas offices in Little Bishop Street, starting at 7:30.