

**BCAN**  
**Homeless Forum**  
CCM Office, 12 City Road  
10 January 2008

## **Introduction**

The meeting had to be moved from Caring at Christmas at the last minute: Ailsa was not well enough to host the event. The notes of this meeting are incomplete: if anyone is able to correct or complete them in some way, please get in touch with Paul Hazelden at CCM.

Present at the meeting were Ian Mountford, Rhea Helena Morgan, Graham Wheeler, Sr. Bernadette, Val Moore and Paul Hazelden. Details of those who sent their apologies have been misplaced, but it is probably safe to assume that Ailsa sent hers.

## **Previous Meeting**

### ***FareShare***

The launch event, which clashed with our previous meeting, was a success. The project is now well established and working well, with the van going out to make regular deliveries several times a week. If anyone wants to get in touch, they can telephone the Project Manager, Suzie Webster, on 0117 971 1005.

## **Agenda Items**

### ***2008 Homelessness Survey***

Most of the planning for this is now complete. Paul is still looking for offers of help from people who would be able to fill in the survey forms for organisations that lack sufficient 'spare' staff to do this easily. Paul asked for people to send their forms to him as soon as possible: you do not need to wait for the end of the week before you send him the forms you have collected.

It was noted that organisations that fail to take part in the survey are unlikely to be fully represented in the survey results, so it is in each organisation's own interests to take part if possible.

Graham will send Paul details of the BSRT teams who will be going out during the week of the survey. Paul will contact the team leaders and see if they would appreciate help with the survey forms.

**Action: Graham and Paul**

### ***Homelessness Strategy Review***

Ailsa was not present to report on this item. It will be held over to the next meeting.

## **Wet Centre**

A 'wet centre' is a hostel where people can drink alcohol on the premises, and where they are allowed to be even if they are intoxicated. There was a recent documentary on the television about wet centres, which was very informative. One point made by the documentary was that because people are allowed to drink, they pace their drinking more than they would if they had to leave.

Progress on the Bristol wet centre continues, although it appears there is some delay in the opening date: it was scheduled to open yesterday.

## **Information Share**

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

The BSRT is now only meeting at Pip'n'Jay and Redcliffe Wharf: there were not enough people at Victoria Methodist Church to justify continuing visiting that location. The BSRT started visiting Victoria Methodist Church because Outreach asked them to, due to concern about beggars hanging around the cashpoint machines in that area.

Redcliffe Wharf is about to be developed as a beach again, so another location will have to be found. Most teams go to the city centre after they finish at Redcliffe Wharf, but fewer homeless people can be found in the centre these days.

It was reported that Oxford and several other places have recently banned Soup Runs.

The meeting last night had as its highlight John Atkinson attending and delivering an interesting talk. John was late, as he was attending to the needs of a couple of people. According to the latest figures, there are some 45 rough sleepers in Bristol and around 400 problematic drug users.

Graham is getting a lot of people volunteering to take part in the Soup Run, but he can't fit them all into the teams that go out.

The numbers vary, but generally they serve 20-40 people at Pip'n'Jay, and 2-15 people at Redcliffe Wharf. They try to be there every night of the year. The busiest nights are Sundays and Thursdays, when the Julian Trust is closed.

### ***Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland***

The Lunch Run on the Saturday before Christmas found that a group from the Potters House had already visited and supplied food. The homeless people who remained were not happy: they were offered food by this group, but they also felt pressurised to attend the church. The Breakfast Run people were also not happy, as much of the food they had prepared was wasted. It seems that the Potters House people don't take food out on a regular basis.

Val told the Potters House people about the BCAN Homeless Forum and invited them to the next meeting. She will also send them a copy of the Survival Handbook so they have some idea of what else is happening in the city.

**Action: Val**

If anyone else wants to get in touch with the Potters House, their address is 6 Sussex Place, BS2 9QW, and their telephone number is 07957 106 203.

The Breakfast Run has been serving an average of 40-50 people. This went up to an average of 60 people in December, apart from the week before Christmas and the Potters House hiccup.

Homelessness Sunday this year is 27 January, but they will be holding the service later in the year, details to follow.

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

In Alisa's absence, Val reported briefly. There seemed to be fewer people than last year, but the smoke-free environment was much better.

Val ran a St John Ambulance Health Clinic, which was very busy. A planned two hours became four hours on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. They treated 27 people: 12 on one night, 9 on two nights, 4 on three nights and 2 on four nights. They also resuscitated one person successfully.

A follow-up meeting has been arranged for 24 January.

### ***St Nicholas of Tolentino***

St Nicholas continue to feed people tea and sandwiches, despite the continuing building work, for two hours each day. They are feeding 30-50 people each day.

### ***Bristol Nights***

This is a fairly new project, reaching out to the 'clubbing' community of Bristol. They are 'providing a Christian presence and listening service to the Friday night-time economy in the city centre of Bristol'. Inevitably, they come into contact with homeless people. It is run by Caroline Virgo and Alison Capey, who both go to Christ Church, Clifton.

They go out from 11:30 pm on Friday night to 3 am Saturday morning, offering tea and coffee. They serve an average of 75 hot drinks a night.

### ***Crisis Centre Ministries***

Some of the Wild Goose clients have been annoying the neighbours recently, so they are now asking people not to hang around outside the shop before it opens.

Recruitment is under way for a new member of staff. The plan is for the Wild Goose to open five days a week once they are in post.

The Life Recovery Group on Friday evenings is going well. A local PCSO came to the group recently, which resulted in some good relationships being established.

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

They are very busy, with over 100 people being fed every Sunday. During the week, they usually feed around 1120 people in Easton, and 80 people at the Candle Community Centre. They are very short of volunteers during the day.

They are open as a Community Centre – not just for homeless people – on Tuesdays, Thursday and Sundays. The SMART Team is on site between 2:00 and 4:30 pm on Tuesday and Thursday.

Over Christmas, they provided meals for elderly people, most of whom were shut-in, so they needed transport. This is increasingly difficult, as the Vulnerable Adults policy means that each driver needs a helper to go with them.

The work with children was publicised by the BBC and resulted in 2,400 gifts being distributed, worth an estimated £12,000. This was worth doing, but very hard work.

There will be a meeting of all the Salvation Army centres next week, which Ian will attend.

## **Close**

### ***Items for Next Agenda***

Items for the agenda of the next meeting include:

- 2008 Homelessness Survey
- Homelessness Strategy Review
- Wet Centre

### ***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.

### ***Websites***

It was agreed to include details of some of the key web sites in the meeting notes.

- [www.aspire-bristol.co.uk](http://www.aspire-bristol.co.uk)
- [www.bcan.org.uk](http://www.bcan.org.uk)
- [www.bristolsoupruntrust.org.uk](http://www.bristolsoupruntrust.org.uk)
- [www.caringinbristol.org](http://www.caringinbristol.org)
- [www.crisis-centre.org.uk](http://www.crisis-centre.org.uk)
- [www.juliantrust.org.uk](http://www.juliantrust.org.uk)

### ***Any Other Business***

We need to ask Vineyard to tell us when they are planning a Sunday 'Banquet' lunch, as this makes a significant difference to the people who normally provide food that day. Would it be possible for them to share the Banquet, and invite other churches to take part?

### ***Future Meetings***

Details of the next two meetings are as follows. All meetings will start at 7:30 pm and aim to finish by 9:30.

**13 March 2008**, at the CCM offices, 12 City Road.

**8 May 2008**, provisionally at Christ Church, Clifton. *To be confirmed.*