

**BCAN**  
**Homeless Forum**  
Christ Church Clifton  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2008

**Introduction**

Everyone present was welcomed to the meeting.

***Those Present***

Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre), Alan Goddard (Crisis Centre), Ailsa McWilliam (Caring at Christmas), Ian Webb (Methodist Centre), Sr. Bernadette (St Nicholas Church), Debbie Green (Methodist Centre), Tony Richmond (Alabare), Val Moore (Christ Church).

***Apologies Received***

John Atkinson (Streetwise), Dave Perry (Emmaus),

***Previous Meetings***

The only action last time was for Paul to get in touch with Vineyard, this was not done so he apologised. Alan has a meeting with them soon and will speak to them.

**Information Share**

***Crisis Centre Ministries***

Open 5 days a week 11-2.30pm 8-10pm feeding approx 150 people a day they need bigger premises. In general there are plenty of volunteers in the evenings there are too many but they do need a few more on days, although numbers are starting to increase. They don't want to duplicate work but want to work together. The vision is to be open for clients, even 7 days. They are getting people off the streets and into supported accommodation. Stepping Stones Ridgeway take most people.

They are doing outreach, most days Alan goes into the parks and speaks people leads to them to attending the Crisis Centre. Alan is going to more schools, the vision is to catch people in school and tell them what it is like. Trudie is doing regular counselling. Andy is doing the LITE course which is doing well. Lisa comes into Bristol with a minibus every week and takes 12 (homeless) people to church Sunday morning. The Vineyard is doing a 'Home Church' at the Crisis Centre every other Sunday. It really needs to be every week so people know when to come. There are not large numbers attending but enough to make it interesting.

The Friday evening 'Life Recovery Group' which is equivalent to AA or NA have a few people facilitating the group but everyone makes themselves vulnerable: they share their stories and encourage others to share theirs. Also people who have a loved one who has an addiction can be helped.

Paul is reading John Adams 'Risk.' Adams is an expert on risk, and the book shows how common sense works. The book is not easy read but it is good and useful.

### **St Nicholas Church**

They are open Monday to Saturday morning for two hours. On Sunday they are open 5pm to 7pm. It is a door ministry and it continues to feel like they are just putting a plaster on. There is a need for both the open door and drop-in types of service. A lot of people who come to the door appreciate the sandwich, smile and listening ear. The Church does feel part of a network. The building is coming on well and the church is being refurbished inside. They have NA & AA meetings every night of the week.

### **Methodist Centre**

They have got a full staff team now and have a great have team in place. It has been reasonably quiet and they are quite surprised. The last few weeks it has been busier. There are a lot of new faces and a lot people asking if someone can help with serious problems. They are not open on Sundays in May but should be open Sundays in June. This is due to a member of staff being out. AA & NA have meetings once a week and the thinking is for more groups to come in. Ian meet Paul yesterday at the Crisis Centre.

The Methodist Centre runs on lines of having enough staff open for health and safety reason. So when one of the four main staff goes off sick this is a problem. It could be reviewed to bring in volunteers to help with this. The main concern is safety of the staff: given the nature of their building they have to be careful. Someone asked about alcohol. The Crisis Centre puts alcohol in a fridge, and the same person gives it back when the client leaves: it is not a problem. One thing they do to give the service users something extra is to put a film on, on Wednesday.

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

The churches saw 50-60 people on the Saturday lunch run. They had the homelessness service in April at the Hope Centre. They wanted it brought forward. It was led by the Thursday group who are people who have been in re-hab. It was a pleasant service. They are struggling to cover the August lunch run.

### **Christ Church**

The breakfast run is continuing and they are meeting more people. The church is looking to redevelop building. In the redesign they are looking at having the church open during the day and how to develop services, maybe a drop in is possible. The CALM committee is inviting people to come in and tell congregation about the service they provide and raise the awareness of the situation. The church is looking at how to welcome everyone but if people are disruptive how do they deal with it? The suggested policy is to treat everyone the same, if member of the congregation behaved in a similar way they would be asked to leave.

## **Alabare Christian Care Centres**

Probably should have been to this meeting before but it is difficult to know who the appropriate person is to represent the organisation, also Alabare don't just work in Bristol. Till 15 months ago all was well with Lazarus House and The Well. They were both started independently. Not sure how Alabare were asked to take them on, as both were started locally. Paul stated that Father Richard did the research and proposed they approach Alabare. The Well's remit is for women exiting the sex industry. Part of the criteria is that they need to be seven days clean before they can move in. Due to the women's lifestyle it is impossible to change or to be committed to change. There have been some changes of manager. Gemma came in with no knowledge of the client group but with supported housing management experience, but she is doing an excellent job. If a vacancy does come up it filled quickly. They have concerns as the supporting people funding level is below what should be, a group of people has helped raise the extra £30,000 they needed.

Lazarus House supports men coming out prison. It has a bit of a chequered history. When the new manager went in he evicted all the residents within two weeks. Thomas House is on the same road but without extra support. There is another house, Shalom. The idea is to move on through the three houses. Related to that is a funding resettlement worker, a second post which never raised the extra covered from the organisation they are currently looking at other funding sources. They have seen people move on successfully. There is a move on house in Henleaze; this opened a month or two ago this is the next stage move on. It is mostly for people coming out of Shalom but it can meet the needs of other people but at present it only has three beds. They are looking at being self-financing and contributing to the resettlement worker. Alabare are employing the TREE co-ordinator who is based at the Compass Centre. There has been some difficulty. The Pilot the council has does have a lot to offer so it is hoped to get results. Andrew House in Clevedon is a next stage after rehab it is not necessarily for people who have been through Detox there. It is about trying to take people away sometimes, from the issues. It is worth being aware of. The sleep out last February went well. They are hoping all Homeless Organisations will take part/get involved next year. The date they are looking at is 27<sup>th</sup> February 2009, which is a month after Homelessness Sunday. It does have a large fundraising aspect. It is not just restricted to Christian organisations, but they do want to keep a Christian ethos.

## **Caring at Christmas**

Work has started on the new edition of the Survival handbook. Nightstop will be starting to recruit for volunteer hosts and drivers. On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September there will be a fundraising ball in aid of Nightstop. This will be at St Paul's Church in Portland Square. Caring at Christmas now have a Patron, Mary Prior, she is the Lord Lieutenant of Bristol. They also have a new chair, Dave Armstrong. At the moment they are looking for more trustees. They are not able to do Caring in August this year but can get volunteers together if anyone else can run it.

## **Compass Centre Launch**

This will take place on 29<sup>th</sup> May. The Night Centre has been open since November. It is a 12.30pm start for the launch.

## **Survey**

Paul apologised for not having done the results – life has been too busy.

## **Strategy Review**

The Preventing Homelessness Strategy is now on the council website. It is now in the public domain. Could it be put online from BCAN website? This should be OK.

## **Fareshare**

At present they are recruiting an assistant for Suzie. The advert will be on the Fareshare website soon. It is a full time post.

## **Horizon**

In February there was a (Horizon) programme on 20 of the most harmful drugs in the UK. Paul had listed some of the results and compiled a list of the number of deaths per 10,000 users. Paul will distribute details with the minutes.

## **New Economics foundation**

There is a new report by NEF, published on 26 March 2008, 'Hitting the target, missing the point: How government regeneration targets fail deprived areas'. It contains some important but disturbing details of how many regeneration targets are way off the point, with projects failing to achieve their aims even though their targets were achieved.

## **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.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.juliantrust.org.uk](http://www.juliantrust.org.uk)

## **Future Meetings**

Details of the 2008 meetings are as follows. All meetings will start at 7:30 pm and aim to finish by 9:30.

**7.30pm, 10<sup>th</sup> July**, Methodist Centre

**7.30pm, 11<sup>th</sup> September** C@C

**7.30pm, 13<sup>th</sup> November** venue TBC