

# **BCAN Homeless Forum**

## **13 May 2010**

### **Alabaré, the Greenway Centre**

## **Open**

### *Present*

Present at the meeting were Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries), Gemma Nokes (Alabaré), Richard Townsend (StreetLife), Ian Webb (Bristol Methodist Centre), Julie Luter (British Red Cross), Jon Stevens (British Red Cross), Kathryn Clements (British Red Cross) and Graham Wheeler (Bristol Soup Run Trust).

Apologies had been received from Alan Goddard.

### *Previous Meeting*

There were no corrections to the notes from the previous meeting.

### *Matters Arising*

We were asked if Dush (representing the Julian Trust at the previous meeting) works for the Salvation Army. Paul said he would check.

An outstanding action from the previous meeting is that Paul has not yet managed to check how much sponsorship was raised by the sleep-out. Gemma thinks that Alabaré raised about £600, but she will check this.

Ian is still collecting pictures and stories from the sleep-out. Richard will email some more to him.

## **Information Share**

### *Bristol Soup Run Trust*

All night are covered. They still use two meeting points: firstly at Pip 'n' Jay, and then at Redcliffe Wharf. Most of the clients they feed are at Pip 'n' Jay. The last time Graham went out he counted 33 people there, including a 12 year old girl with her mother. They have 23 teams, as many teams only go out once a month, and around 70 active volunteers.

Their main recent achievement has been to put together a mission statement and a health and safety statement. Graham circulated a copy of this to the people present.

BSRT had a record Christmas, with more money given and more material support offered than ever before.

BSRT receive many offers of help from potential volunteers, but often find it

difficult to fit these people into the existing teams. Paul reminded the meeting that Dush had asked if we could point in the direction of the Julian Trust any volunteers who could not be used by another group.

There have been a few incidents recently, often a result of alcohol or dissatisfaction with the food, with some fighting. But they build up a relationship with the clients over the years, which helps to reduce the problems. If there is any violence, the team is instructed to put everything in the car and drive off.

They used to get many foreigners, but recently they are seeing fewer.

Hungry people sometimes phone Graham and ask him for food. This recently happened again at around 10 pm. It is one of the penalties of making your telephone number known to the public.

Graham is very concerned about the new Vetting and Barring legislation which will prevent people from working with vulnerable adults. Paul said he had an update on that to give later in the meeting.

On 11 September 2010 we are invited to a barbecue at Pip 'n' Jay, starting at around 8.30 pm. There will be music and stalls with books and hot food.

## *Alabaré*

Gemma asked if people know about ET2010. Alabaré is heavily involved in this. They took part in the public launch at Bristol cathedral and one resident spoke at this.

Alabaré now have 5 beds in each of 3 houses and 3 beds in another, making space for 18 people in all in the Bristol area, all for male ex-offenders. They had to make a resettlement worker redundant back in January, but he was made a team leader for Andrew House. A resident recently moved into his own house.

The Well has problems due to a lack of referrals, so there are too many voids. They currently have 5 people resident.

Alabaré and CCM are setting up a partnership to run a furniture charity shop in Clevedon. They are about to sign the lease any day now. When they have the shop, they will need stock and volunteers. Catherine from Alabaré recently did a sponsored bike ride and raised £300.

Alabaré would like to set up a new house in Bristol for ex-service personnel but are struggling with the funding. Any case studies concerning ex-service personnel would help the funding bids – please let Gemma have the details.

## *StreetLife*

Richard explained that StreetLife started in the early 1990s with a pastor's daughter feeling sorry for the people in the streets and giving out sandwiches. The vision took hold within the church and developed into a significant project. Richard has now been leading the project for 5 years.

They currently go to Brunswick Square every second Saturday in the month. Another church used to operate on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, but this ceased about

18 months ago. They set up four stations at 6 pm and provide hot food (two different hot meals: jacket potato and baked beans, and pasta bolognese), cold food (sandwich packs, bread, chocolate, fruit and packet of crisps), drinks and clothing. They usually finish around 7 or 7.30 pm, but recently they kept going to 8 pm.

Each month they also provide clothing, which they get from the charity shop in Patchway: they are given some of the clothes which would have been sent for rags after 4 weeks.

StreetLife used to operate every second Sunday, but the new Pastor wanted people to attend the service instead, so they moved to the Saturday and lost an average of 40 people. The volunteers work with the clients, and Richard's role is to care for the volunteers.

### ***Bristol Methodist Centre***

Drop in centre is open 5 days each week, serving hot food on 4 of them. They have been busier over the last few months: they were seeing 50-60 people a day, and are now seeing an average of 60-70 people. There are now fewer Eastern Europeans than previously. Several clients have died recently.

There are various regular sessions:

- Tuesday morning at 11 am, Cocaine Anonymous run a meeting. (CA also run a meeting each week at the Compass Centre.)
- Tuesday afternoon, UKOnline
- Tuesday evening, sex and love addiction group (another 12-step program)
- Wednesday afternoon, films
- Thursday morning, art
- Thursday afternoon, literacy

They have a small chapel, and the service on Good Friday was well attended.

### ***Crisis Centre Ministries and the Wild Goose***

Squatters moved into the Queen Vic for a few days, but they left without serious difficulty. Since then, the rebuilding work has started on the property. According to the current timetable, the Wild Goose should move to Easton in October.

As mentioned by Gemma, CCM also plan to open a Charity Shop in Clevedon in partnership with Alabaré. The number of meals serviced in the coffee shop have risen recently, to an average of 320 meals a day. They continue to get people into treatment on a regular basis.

## **Notified Business**

### ***New Street***

The service at the New Street Day Centre will be changing from 1 June. As far as

we know, there will be no food, no women's night shelter, and possibly no drop-in. A meeting is scheduled for Monday 17 May when we should be given more news. As far as we know, attendance is by invitation only, but if anyone is interested they could try contacting the Compass Centre and asking for details.

For an update on changes at New Street, please contact Paul after 17 May.

## British Red Cross

John is a volunteer with the BRC, leading this project.

The British Red Cross recently undertook a needs assessment, and the homeless community was one of the five priorities identified. BRC have not worked directly with homeless people before, but they do have some experience at offering tailored first aid training to those who might need it, such as asylum seekers.

They want to focus on the health issues homeless people face. They have considerable experience of working with vulnerable communities, delivering tailored training to them. Health is a massive problem, and many organisations are involved. Many homeless people are registered with a GP, but there is still a great deal of unmet need.

The Red Cross is primarily an emergency organisation, reacting to problems and responding to requests for help. But people don't always ask for the help they need. BRC are seeking to understand what further needs they could help with.

The training is much more flexible than it used to be, not just about providing a certificate. They have done work with Somali group, drug users, and other disadvantaged minorities. The starting point in each case is: what do you need to learn?

They also provide Therapeutic Care at One25, which includes gentle massage. They also work at Naomi House, and are willing to discuss what they could do at The Well.

They want to engage and train homeless people in first aid skills. They can run a very informal session, or something more structured with a certificate at the end of it. They will cover issues like recognising and responding to an infected injecting site and when it is appropriate to seek medical attention.

They have already piloted a project with heroin users to prevent people dying from an overdose. Drug workers deliver parts of the session about heroin use, and BRC do the parts on first aid; attendees they take away a kit to give an injection (Naloxone) to someone who is overdosing. Four lives have been saved as a result of this scheme in the past 18 months. It has recently been extended to run in Gloucestershire. It is delivered through a partnership, as the BRC don't have direct access to the clients.

A question was asked about how this activity is funded? BRC have some external funds from sources such as NTA, and they also draw on internal BRC money. They will find the money to kick-start the project, and then try to raise money if seems to be viable.

Can they offer health advice on a drop in basis? St John Ambulance do this at present, and BRC would not want to duplicate this service.

They have trained staff and volunteers in BDP, and also train the mentors group a few times a year.

Would the sessions with clients always be one off? Not necessarily. Each is run as a standalone session, but if someone comes back they will tailor the next session accordingly. They can also come back if they need a refresher, or after a year when their Naloxone has expired.

Some time ago, they had a string of deaths at a project in Swansea, and used this approach to help prevent further deaths. Since then the project has grown, the person leading it would do a demonstration in a drop in every week or every few weeks, and people would join in.

They aim to have volunteers who don't become full trainers but who can provide the initial skills covered in these sessions. CAAD have volunteers who have moved on from being clients and would probably benefit from this approach.

BRC also work in secondary schools, offering various workshops alongside the police. A life skills program in the Create Centre offers first aid training to school children.

The initial idea was to run a taster session at the BRC base in Warmley, but a more central location might be better, such as Trinity Tabernacle, the Salvation Army or the Compass Centre. The taster session will be run for staff and volunteers, to demonstrate what they would provide for homeless people if the project is established on a regular basis.

It is difficult to find a suitable time, as many volunteers will not be free during the working day. One possibility is to offer two tasters, one on a week day and one in an evening. They will try running a daytime event first, and see how this works.

The provisional date for the first session is 2 – 4pm on Wednesday 14 July. Paul check if the Compass Centre is free and book a space there. BRC will produce a poster, which Paul will circulate to the BHF email list. There is no need to get numbers in advance, so people can just turn up on the day. *[Post meeting note: the Compass Centre has been booked for this event, and BRC have decided they want to know numbers in advance after all.]*

## ***Vetting and Barring***

Paul has a report on the vetting and barring legislation, written by his Volunteer Support Manager, which he can make available if people are interested. Amongst other details: projects will not need to check volunteers if they only provide food, but we need to be careful and may need to check the volunteers if they are involved in providing training or advice.

## ***Other Items***

Paul circulated the updated sheet with details of food and advice services in

Bristol. However, it is missing the StreetLife details, and needs to be updated again. Paul will do this and post the revised version on the BCAN web site.

Time was running out in the meeting, so Paul briefly mentioned the 'Outcomes Star' as a tool which seems to be increasingly being used in assessing clients and tracking their progress.

## *Close*

## 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.alabare.co.uk](http://www.alabare.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)

## Items for Next Agenda

Please let Paul know if you would like anything on the agenda for the July meeting.

## Future Meetings

Details of the next few meetings are as follows. All meetings will start at 7:30 pm and aim to finish by 9:30. Please let Paul know if you would like to host one evening.

- The next meeting will be held on 8 July at the Bristol Methodist Centre.
- The following meeting will be on 9 September at Crisis Centre Ministries.

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Web site: <http://www.bcan.org.uk/bhf>

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