

# **BCAN Homeless Forum Julian Trust 12 May 2011**

## **Open**

### ***People***

Present at the meeting were Rhianân Lowes (Caring at Christmas), Richard Drake (Julian Trust), Chris Keegan (Bristol Methodist Centre), Paul Hazelden (Crisis Centre Ministries) and Val Moore (St John Ambulance; Christ Church, Clifton; and Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland).

Apologies had been received from Ian Webb and Clive Richards.

### ***Previous Meeting***

Paul apologised for the late arrival of the notes from the previous meeting. Several typing errors were identified.

### ***Matters Arising***

#### **Salvation Army**

Are the Salvation Army still involved with homeless people? We believe that Ashley Road is now concentrating on families and children; Paul will try to get updates from Easton and Logos House. It would be good to strengthen our relationships with the Salvation Army again.

Perhaps we can arrange to hold another meeting at Logos House - the Wade Street hostel?

#### **Young People**

Bristol Nightstop are still looking for a base for young people during the day; however they are working with 'Safe Place' at present, which is a part of Connexions. Young people can go there during the day.

Also on the horizon for young people is the old fire station at Bridewell, near Laser Quest. It will become a Young Persons Service Hub, a base for various services. The Kingswood Foundation is leading the project. YMCA are involved in the café, possibly alongside other organisations. The current plan is to provide both space for organisations and space for young people.

#### **Foodbanks and similar**

There was some discussion of the Matthew Tree project, and how it fits in with the two Foodbanks. It is not yet formally open: operations are expected to start properly in the Autumn.

The Bristol North West Foodbank had its official opening today, 12 May.

The Bristol East Foodbank will be formally opening on Thursday 7 June. Everybody is invited to the event: 7 pm at St Marks Baptist Church, St Marks Road, Easton.

## **Information Share**

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

The Bristol Methodist Centre are considering at the possibility of relocating. They have looked at various properties, but need a building fit for purpose.

Staffing: they have a new chef and support worker – one person doing a bit of both jobs, and combining them very well. They are very busy with support work: many benefit claims, both reapplying and new benefits applications. They are grateful to the volunteers helping with all this work. Matt is coming down each week from the Wellbeing Centre. This is working really well.

Numbers have increased by about 50% over last year. They are also providing a lot of bus and train tickets, which is working very successfully. One lad went home for mothers day to Cork!

Overall, they are very busy, working hard and holding their own. But a new building is very much needed.

### ***Julian Trust***

The Julian Trust have just closed this week to repair the ventilation system. They will reopen Monday 16, or possibly Friday 13 if the work is done quickly enough.

They are taking part in the Open Doors scheme this year. For more information, see <http://www.bristoldoorsopenday.org/>. On the 'venues' page they are number 9.

They have considered opening another evening, but don't have enough reliable over-nighters, so the plan is on hold at present.

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

Every year, they get busier. This year, they reached full capacity overnight: all 50 beds were filled every night. Last year, they had 25 empty bed nights, the year before around 35. Also, every year they serve more meals. The number of meals served seems to go up by 100 or 150 each year; 1800 meals were served this time.

The staff structure changes each year. There are more changes under way, which they will talk about at the next meeting. At present, Cass is the charity manager (looking at fundraising, policies and procedures); Rhianân is the project manager; Kelly is the part time admin assistant, on maternity leave from June. Kelly's absence will not be covered, but they will employ someone from September to January.

The Survival Handbook is normally updated every 6 months, but the next update in July will have to last a year: it will not be updated in December 2011; the next update

will be in July 2012; then it will return to updates every six months. Any changes to the Handbook should be sent to Rhi by early June, no later than Friday 10.

No newsletter was sent out this year, in case people were wondering.

Training: all supervisors will be trained in first aid this year. There were more incidents this year, not only at Caring at Christmas, but also elsewhere. Training in managing difficult behaviour will also be essential this year. The general advice is to make sure somebody knows about the situation, and back off.

There have been lots of changes recently. Kit has resigned as chair, and Lou is standing in as chair at present.

Promotion: they are doing lots of talks to churches and schools. The sleep out this year raised £530 for Caring at Christmas.

They can use 16-18 year olds in the run-up to Christmas, doing things like supermarket donations. Val noted that her youth group wants to do something, not just hear about other people doing things, so this might be an opportunity for them.

### ***Val Moore***

There is no significant change to be reported from the Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland: the Saturday lunches are as busy as ever, the numbers have not trailed off since the Winter as they usually do; and they are serving more breakfasts now.

Val wrote a piece for the St John Ambulance newsletter about working at the Julian Trust. This was well received, and may be used more widely.

Val is trying to negotiate some first aid training which will be specific to the needs of the Caring at Christmas situation. Caring at Christmas need a full day course run on two days.

### ***Matthew Tree Project***

Elim Church have given a new date for the Matthew Tree Project launch: Sunday 12 June 2011, at the 9 am and 11 am services. Radio Bristol wanted to do an interview on the morning of the original launch date, and Mark is trying to get this rescheduled for 12 June.

### ***Park Bench***

Park Bench are helping the Compass Centre to set up a library for their clients along the same lines as their own service.

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

The Wild Goose continues to serve around 300 meals a day. The new building is far better than the City Road site, as people can sit in comfort and chat after the meal. Relations with the local community are also going well: a lot of effort goes into ensuring that the clients do not cause problems to people going past on the street.

CCM is looking at the possibility of setting up a Women's Night Shelter if the current one closes. They are also looking at the future of the City Road building: whether to keep it, and if so, how it should be used.

Work on the new building continues, but a lack of funds is delaying completion of the Chapel Room. There is more news in the latest newsletter, 'StreetWise', which has been produced this week.

### ***King's Kitchen***

Clive Richards sent a reminder about opening times: The King's Kitchen opens between 5 am and 9 am on Tuesday mornings.

## **Other Business**

### ***Women's Night Shelter***

Richard has contacted Sally from Novas to try and find out if they still needed the funding: it seems that they did, but he has not had a reply.

The Women's Night Shelter is still opening at New Street. Novas Scarman are running it as a project.

CCM might be able to run something if the current service closes: this possibility is being discussed, and a plan is being put to the trustees, in the hope that if the service closes at New Street, some replacement might be up and running with minimal delay.

### ***Open Space***

Open Space is the name of an informal structure of meetings in the Bristol area, which have been facilitated by Roger Allen and Helen Harrison over the past year or two. They are linked with the Chrysalis grants scheme and the Bristol:networks web site.

There was an Open Space meeting on 2 February which looked at 'Serving the Poor' and another was arranged for 4 May but was cancelled at short notice. The next Open Space 'Serving the Poor' meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 25 May, which clashes with our volunteer training.

Paul has just been sent some notes from the February meeting, which he will circulate. It is not clear how these meetings differ in aim or audience from the Homeless Forum. Paul will try to find out more and report back to the next meeting.

### ***Wet Centre***

The report on a possible Wet Centre in Bristol went to Safer Bristol.

As far as we can determine, the report made a strong case for providing a Wet Centre in Bristol, and this was accepted. However, presumably because there are no funds to do any new projects, the decision was made to commission NOMS to deliver the recommendations.

(Background: the National Offender Management Service, or 'NOMS', is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice responsible for the correctional services in England and Wales, created in 2004 by combining parts of the National Probation Service and the Prison Service with some other Home Office functions.)

NOMS has made the decision to implement the decision to create a Wet Centre by publicising the range of existing facilities which engage drinkers to some degree. In other words, they have decided to implement the decision by not creating a Wet Centre. There appears to be no opportunity to challenge this.

Neil Burwell is investigating the possibilities for creating a Wet Centre anyway; Paul had hoped that Neil would have come back to him before this meeting, but this has not happened.

If a Wet Centre seems possible, it was suggested we might get support or sponsorship from retailers such as Tesco.

## ***Alternatives to Violence***

A thought about a possible long term aim: there is an organisation called the Alternatives to Violence Project ('AVP'), which has started working in prisons. Richard has been involved with them as an apprentice facilitator, as has Heather.

What AVP normally does is to organise group workshops for people who want to handle conflict well. What we would like to do is to find ways to run the workshop for our clients. One difficulty is that the standard workshop lasts for a full weekend. We could possibly start in hostels, or with people in rehab. Another possibility is to run the workshop for people who work with our clients.

## ***Meeting on Drugs Policy***

The title of the meeting is: "War on Drugs' or time for peace?" Among the topics to be considered are the following.

- How successful is our current law on drugs at minimising harm to people and society?
- What happens in other countries, and what could we learn from them?

There will be three main speakers.

- A local mother giving an account of the impact of drugs in her family.
- Professor David Nutt, the former government advisor on drugs.
- Danny Kushlick, founder of Transform Drugs Policy Foundation.

There will be a chance to ask questions afterwards. The meeting will on on Friday 13 May. Tea and coffee will be served from 6.30 pm, and the meeting starts at 7 pm. The venue is Cotham School Dance Studio, Cotham Lawn Road, BS6 6DT (near the top of St Michael's Hill, just past the roundabout).

There is no charge, but donations to cover expenses will be welcome. It promises to be very interesting. The Bristol Justice Network are organising it; quite a few Quakers are involved.

## **Survey**

We are getting several people asking about the size of the homeless problem we face in Bristol. It has been suggested that we conduct another survey.

We have done two surveys in the past, in 2007 and 2008. The 2007 results are on the BCAN web site; the 2008 results have not been collated yet, although Paul now has the offer of a volunteer to do this work.

It was agreed that we want to run the survey again, as far as possible repeating questions from last time so the results can be compared. It should be interesting and helpful to see how things have changed since 2007.

One problem with the survey as we ran it before is that it misses the women who don't use the services at usual times. The sex workers are a complicated and changing population. What can be done to fill in this gap?

Other thoughts: we need to make sure all the lunch runs and breakfast runs are included; the reference to Caring at Christmas must be moved to the 'In the last year' section; we need to add Mommas Kitchen to the list of places.

Our provisional dates for the survey are 17-23 October 2011. Everyone will check that there is no problem with these dates, and confirm at the next meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Thursday 14 July, 7.30 pm at the Caring at Christmas office, Little Bishop Street.

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