

# **BCAN Homeless Forum**

## **Meeting Notes**

### **12 March 2015**

#### **Caring in Bristol, Little Bishop Street**

## **Open**

### **Present**

Paul Hazelden (BCAN), Richard Drake (Julian Trust), Lindsey Jones (Caring in Bristol, Strangers' Friend Society), Steve Jones (Bristol Soup Run Trust), Val Moore (St John Ambulance, Churches Together CCR, Christ Church Clifton), Colette Brown (Matthew Tree Project), Sarah Bond (Avon & Somerset Police), Di Noon (Christ Church Breakfast Run).

Apologies were received from Debs Perkins (Christ Church Breakfast Run), Gill Nowland (One25), Jonnie Angel (Wild Goose Drop-In, Crisis Centre Ministries), Jackie Stephenson (Churches Together CCR), Helen Riddell (Avon & Somerset Police).

## **Previous Meeting**

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

### **Outstanding Business**

Val handed out a leaflet with details of the Christ Church 2015 Lent Lectures. BCAN will request that homelessness is included as one of the topics for 2016.

### **Matters Arising**

The date of the "Your kindness can kill" pavement stencil campaign is not yet known.

## **Information Share**

Up to date news from Bristol Nightstop, Caring in Bristol, the Strangers' Friend Society, the Bristol Soup Run Trust, the Bear Pit Redevelopment Group, the Survival Handbook, the Rucsac Project, the Mayor's Fund 2015 and the BCAN Homeless Forum can be found here: [http://www.bcan.org.uk/bhf/meet/BHF\\_Meeting\\_150312\\_News.htm](http://www.bcan.org.uk/bhf/meet/BHF_Meeting_150312_News.htm)

The Bristol Soup Run Trust and the Christ Church Breakfast Run reported a changing demographic with fewer Eastern European guests, more ex-service personnel and a younger

age group. People are very hungry. Richard will circulate details of organisations for ex-servicemen.

The Saturday lunchtime soup run from Churches Together CCR is moving from the Bear Pit to St James Park from 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015. Guests and providers have been informed.

Crisis Centre Ministries are conducting a feasibility study into a new service in the City Centre offering weekend support and accommodation; further details are available from Jonnie Angel. If anyone knows of a building which may be available in the City Centre please contact Jonnie.

The Mayor's Fund 2015 is still open for last minute funding applications.

Lindsey will obtain contact details for the Rucsac Project as the Forum would like to be more involved if the event is repeated next year.

Avon & Somerset police are getting complaints about groups of people sleeping rough together in doorways in Broadmead. The Marriott Hotel is a particular gathering point. There is legislation pending to stop this from happening. These groups do not appear to include women which indicates they are staying more securely at the Spring of Hope.

Christ Church assists the Sisters of the Church ("the Nuns") with their food parcels: Paul is in contact with them, but they have no other current involvement with BCAN. There will be hustings at Redland Park church on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 3.00pm. Val is shortly to attend a seminar on health equality by the homeless unit of the QNI (the Queen's Nursing Institute) - this is aimed at medical professionals, but Val will find out if the event is open to guests.

The Matthew Tree Project is increasing its use of 1:1 dedicated outreach workers and attempting to help people before they actually become homeless. Numbers are growing and official statistics will be provided for the next Forum meeting. The Project is keen to emphasise that the food they distribute is appetising and healthy, and poor quality or out of date donations will not be used.

The Julian Trust night shelter is full and turning people away most evenings. They are trying to get referrals to the Second Step / Golden Key project when they identify guests with very complex needs. The aim of the Golden Key is to offer long term individual help with priority access to services for people with three out of four of the following issues: homelessness, reoffending, substance misuse and mental illness. Bristol is a pilot for this Lottery funded project of which the Forum is very supportive.

**N.B. The Julian Trust will be closed from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August to Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 inclusive. This advance notice is being given to enable as many other organisations as possible to remain open e.g. by arranging extra volunteers over the summer.**

***Late News:** The Julian Trust are planning to replace their heating and ventilation system this year. This is a major piece of work that they hope will take place during their summer closure. However, they have been advised that the work could take up to four weeks to complete and so they may not be able to provide a full service for an additional two weeks. When plans are clearer they will let everyone know what dates and services are affected.*

There is a meeting of the Forum for Change 'Politics and Social Action' group at 10.30 am on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at the Baptist Church in City Road, for individuals who want to engage constructively with politics and social action to bring about change. BCAN recognises that its members must protect the non-political status of their charitable organisations but Paul encouraged people to consider participating in a personal capacity if it is appropriate for them to do so.

Richard is actively campaigning to get more homeless people to vote in the forthcoming election, albeit they may need help to do so. It is possible for them to register at a service address; more information is available on the BCC website.

## Notified Business

### BHF starting time

The Forum will retain the later start time of 6.30pm for the next meeting and then assess whether this is better for most people.

### Sleep-Out

The Sleep-Out was a great success with record numbers attending and an excellent response from the public– we predict total funds raised between £45 - 50,000. Crisis Centre Ministries raised over £16,000 and Julian Trust raised over £10,000. There was a lot of media coverage albeit of varying quality. We would benefit from stronger branding in future as there was some confusion with the Big Issue Sleep-Out. Richard will attend a feedback meeting with Bristol City Council on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**The provisional date for next year's sleep-out is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2016.** If this year's numbers are repeated stricter arrangements for registration, arrival and catering will be required. The Forum agreed that 250 should be the maximum for safety reasons. The Risk Assessment will be revisited.

### Homelessness Awareness Week

The Homeless Information pop-up fair in the Galleries was also a great success with 24 different organisations taking part. Several members of the public referred themselves for assistance, which demonstrates the challenge we still face in helping people gain access to the help they need in this area.

We hope that increasing awareness of the work of the various organisations will enable people to seek help at an earlier stage. The various charities also found it a useful opportunity to share information. We hope the momentum has been created for a continuing partnership with Bristol City Council in future years.

## BCAN future options

The meeting with Churches Together in Greater Bristol has been postponed. Please contact Paul if you have ideas to contribute or would like to be involved with the updated BCAN.

## Faith Action Audit

The survey is complete and 41 organisations responded. These will now be followed up with stories and case studies; please contact Paul with your contributions.

## Ongoing issues

### **Survival Handbook update**

The Handbook was widely distributed at the Homeless Information Fair and requests have been received for a larger/clearer map to be included. The next issue will include a one-page week-to-view summary of food and accommodation.

## Involving the workers

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the next meeting.

## Information sharing and confidentiality

Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the next meeting.

## Close

### Future meetings

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 6.30 pm.

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

LJ  
22.03.15