

**Bristol wide Social Justice Group Meeting (BSJG): “Global Issues Forum”**  
**9<sup>th</sup> September 2003**  
**Woodlands Upper hall**  
**Hosted by Roger Allen – Christian Aid (BCF) & Janet Mills – Tearfund (Woodlands)**

**Minutes**

- **Attendees;**

Steve Abbott, Viv Cloke, Paul Tipler, Heather Thomas, Gaynor Lewis, Mike Ogborne, Simon Cole, Sharon Forward, Sue Mc Gowen, Debby Bird, Cherry Dennison, Dave Roderick, Steve Jackson, Andy Luxford, Joel Lewis.

- **Apologies;**

Pauline Berndes, Stephen Knowles, Neil Edbrooke, Mike Pears, Jason Yapp, Philip Jinadu, Richard Brown, Pat Seymour, Diane Barnard, David Lawrence, Mark Wilcox.

- **Introductions** Roger Allen,

Reminder of purpose and also that the group is under the BCAN umbrella.  
Purpose to encourage the churches and individuals to action and seeking the best way to do that. To be good news to the poor both locally and globally.  
Raising awareness in churches of global issues.

Outline of evening; 4 presentations from local organisations working globally;  
Blythwood Care  
Eurovangelism  
Kingsway Project  
Aspire

Also Roger gave some feedback from June 28<sup>th</sup> Trade Justice lobby, and highlighted the very immediate postcard campaign in the Action request leaflet, lobbying government prior to the Cancun Trade round.

- Mike Ogborne – Blythwood Care – Presentation.

(Blythwood Care, Christchurch, Redland Road, Cotham, Bristol, BS6 6AG.  
[www.blythwood.org.uk](http://www.blythwood.org.uk))

ICQ linked with Blythwood as a result of this forum, and advertising Christmas campaign.

Mike Ogborne based at Cornerstone Ministries. Organisation has trailers parked all over the country to store goods prior to taking overseas. Origins from Blythwood Square in Glasgow, tract ministry which met very many poor on the streets. About mission together; word and deed. International aid, disaster relief, child poverty aid and social care. Covers area in E. Europe previously behind the iron curtain. Works alongside tract ministry – correspondence courses; Nigeria, Romania, Bibles to; Malawai, Kenya, Uganda. 100 Arctic truck loads in 2002, 1500 tonnes inc. literature.

-Food. Weather an important factor to access, particularly for pensioners. Soup kitchen provide with food, Bulgaria.

-Clothes. Distribution, Romanian winter so cold, often –15.

-Stranger. Daniel centre, Romania. Catering for orphans, who would normally leave orphanages and end up on the streets. House parenting, social skills. 7 out of 8 hold down jobs after this care.

-Abandoned children. Supports ward in hospital. Casa Alba – white house. Working with mums. fostering/ adoption

-Sick. Albania, Siberia. Medical kits provided. Also spending time with the sick.

-Prison. Gherla Prison, Romania. Bible studies, creating a very different atmosphere.

-Shoe box appeal. 86,000 delivered last year. Moldova, Romania. Children and old people, also not forgetting the men, who often get forgotten! Also to Gypsy villages.

-Micro businesses, children's clubs.

#### Needs:

- Volunteer support driver in Bristol area. (non HGV)
- Sort and packers on regular basis.
- Volunteers to check shoeboxes.
- Opportunities to speak to churches

- Dave Roderick. – Eurovangelism – Presentation.

Working on Eastern Europe since 1965, originally supporting pastors in persecuted churches with cash. When the wall came down in 1989 the real situation became apparent. Social care projects were needed.

1989, 90, 91 huge opportunities with Luis Palau, Nicky Cruz etc, but now westernisation taking hold.

Evangelism now through Alpha, needs alpha translators and coordinators.

Ears to hear, eyes to see!

Yugoslav civil war, aid opens doors.

Siberian house churches, refugee camps, aid to neighbours now a growing church. Aid and the gospel together!

Autumn, harvest for the hungry project. Food parcels, originally 600 parcels, but 22,000 last year to Bosnia. This year focus is Moldova. (Video shown)

Working in Romania, Croatia, Bosnia, Moldova, Albania, Macedonia, with abandoned children, the elderly, poor, refugees and disabled. Bringing hope and comfort.

World grain harvest, Moldova 80% down on what it was, economy hit hard. Working with Blythwood care trucks. Samaritans purse. Helping each other.

Needs:

- Register by 25th October for contributing boxes to project. Emphasis is on the harvest.
- boxes to be filled, please stick to exactly what is requested, as anything else jeopardises shipment.
- Left overs do go to local projects in Bristol
- Schools work, Euroaid/Eurovangelism making the link with Christianity. Being up front about evangelism.

- Gaynor Lewis – Kingsway Project – Presentation

(Belarus Church Appeal, PO Box 172, Kingswood, Bristol, BS30 8DF)

The effects of Chernobyl in Eastern Europe really on the heart of the Kingsway church, and project originated from that 5 years ago, faith to fill ½ a lorry. 6 weeks ago project sent 3<sup>rd</sup> arctic.

Project collects aid for communities in Belarus, which is distributed by the churches, supporting local pastors (who also very poor), now 5 new churches.

There is big opposition, but churches allowed to continue because of the aid. Government passed a law saying that the church would get shut down unless the fabric of the church building is complete, it must look like a church. Project helping church to do this, for materials, much of the is work being done by church members. Praying for this law to be repealed!

Kingsway aid channelled to; Kids clubs, village churches, cell groups. Kingsway working in the East Bristol area with other churches contributing, with November being the time to load up with clothing and equipment.

Link/networks with Eurovangelism.

- Needs;
- Storage for stuff collected, in the Kingswood area.

- Paul Tiper – Aspire- Presentation

(order line no 0870 066 4153)

Aspire - distributing Fairtrade products and helping the local homeless.

Formed in Bristol by two Oxford graduates, in The Wesley Methodist Church in town.

Idea is to give homeless and ex- homeless people a job, give them skills, and aim to keep them 6 months to a year, to give them a chance, reference and hopefully help change habits for people with difficult lifestyles.

There are 7 Aspires across the country.

The core of the job is delivering and collecting catalogues, which can be quite tough in all weathers, and can be very boring. However on the verge of developing new businesses, grant application to the ESF to start window cleaning company.

- Prayer needs;
- Very frustrating, catalogue company in crisis! Need to resolve issues.
- Company owes a significant amount.
- Council pays quarterly in arrears, which doesn't help.
- Lead up to Christmas, distributing catalogues.
- ESF bid
- Part time support workers.

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RA; Suggested putting these prayer requests on the Bristol Prayer Wall, contact Naomi Knapp. Bristol needs prayed for 24-7.

SA: Week is divided up with people signing up to prayer for one hour a week.

[www.bristolprayerwall.org.uk](http://www.bristolprayerwall.org.uk)

AOB;

RA; Thank you to all who put presentations together for tonight.

Resources exhibition day and idea for the future?

Need for a steering group, making next year more grounded.

Getting an email discussion group going, possibly Steve Knowles to do.

Web site? Tim (Helen) Harrison possibly?

SA; BCAN coming out of EA, in area 60 churches. Churches represented here not necessarily members.  
Forum mailings for meetings. Sense of an on going networking dynamic.  
Which EA can get plugged into.

RA; Sometimes things can be overwhelming, so many issues/projects to tackle.

One issue not represented too much, persecuted Christians. (George Baxter-Release?) Nov 16<sup>th</sup> Persecuted Christians Sunday

Way forward 2004? Any thoughts/ ideas please feel free to contact Roger or Janet.

Joel Lewis; SPEAK

A new uni based prayer and action group, but not exclusively uni, open to all.  
Campaigns arms trade, trade justice and debt.  
Prayer, action, mailings, training.  
[www.speakbristol.org.uk](http://www.speakbristol.org.uk)

RA; Next meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> January?

VC; 15<sup>th</sup> November, Cairns Road Baptist Fairtrade Christmas fair.  
Aspire present.

Also 18<sup>th</sup> October & 15<sup>th</sup> November Fairtrade café/ fair, Brislington.  
At the Youth and community centre, Wick Road, Brislington, 10.30am – 3pm