

CHURCHES TOGETHER FOR CHIPPING BARNET
Justice and Peace Newsletter 36
AUGUST 2016



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**Homeless Action
in Barnet -
empowering
homeless people**

1. Homeless Action in Barnet

HAB will celebrate its 20th year in 2017. It began in 1997 as a soup kitchen and has developed into a fully-functioning Day Centre catering for Barnet's most vulnerable people. In their July Newsletter, HAB Chair John Bier writes:

“...the need for HAB is as great now as it ever has been.....when I have chatted with clients at the HSB Centre and with clients who have been referred onto the Winter Nightshelter, there is often much gratitude for the practical support and guidance. But beyond that there is also a common theme of how important it is that HAB offers a ‘safe space’ with a non-judgemental welcome and a kind word to people who are at one of the lowest points in their lives. HAB is literally the last ‘safety net’ for many vulnerable people. Our continued survival as a place of change is critical.”

HAB, 36B Woodhouse Road, London N12 0RG. Tel: 020 8446 8400

HAB is generally open from Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays.

Interested in volunteering with HAB? Call 020 8446 8400 or send an email to hab@habcentre.org



2. The Chipping Barnet Foodbank moved on 12th July to its new distribution centre at the St Peter Parish Centre, 63 Somerset Road, New Barnet EN5 1RF.

Open on Tuesdays, 12 - 2 pm and Saturdays 10 -12 noon.

Enquiries 07716 890 55. Website www.chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk.

Click on “donate food” to find out what is needed, and for tips on how to cook tasty meals on a budget.

Community Sponsorship for Refugees

On 19th July, the Home Office and Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, launched a new scheme to encourage community groups, including churches, to sponsor a refugee family and thus support their resettlement.

The Home Office's Department for Communities and Local Government has recognised that there are some community groups wishing to support families fleeing conflict, and has published some documents outlining the scheme:

- Full community sponsorship guidance for prospective sponsors
- Application for approval as a full community sponsor
- Resettlement plan template
- Sample agreement

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship>

4. Jean Slade

Sheila Gallagher and Helga Calloway write:

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Jean Slade - a much loved character in our local community — on 28th June 2016 at the age of 83.

Jean was a well-known activist for Justice and Peace and a great supporter of the ecumenical movement. She was an early member of the High Barnet Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) and its successor Churches Together for Chipping Barnet, and though she was received into the Catholic Church at the age of 13, she remained very open to her brothers and sisters of all faiths and none.

So many people knew her as the senior librarian in the Chipping Barnet Library. In that role she helped and supported many families and would always lend a friendly ear to those who wanted to share their stories. Many young children remember her with great affection.

On retirement, she worked as a full time volunteer for Oxfam where the book department in the local shop thrived under her direction. As a member of Oxfam she travelled widely in the developing world to see at first hand how projects were succeeding.

In the last few years, her health began to deteriorate and she died peacefully in Barnet Hospital. She will be long remembered in Barnet and much missed.

5. Hope Corner Community Centre

Rosemary Watkins reports: Hope Corner now has an experienced chef - Sarah-Jane Brickell, who is passionate about encouraging everyone to eat well and healthily. She is spending August readying the kitchen for use, and we hope that the lunch service will be in operation in September. In the meantime Hope Corner is open for coffee and cake and is building up a regular clientele. Do contact us if you would like to hold an event there.

Hope Corner, 185 Mays Lane, EN5 2DY, next to the Co-op.

Open Monday to Friday, 10 am to 4 pm. Tel: 020 8364 8756

Email: thevalleycentre@btconnect.com. (No new website yet)

6. Christian Aid and Brexit

How are the international aid organisations going to react to the UK being out of the European Union? Christine Allen and Jenny Brown of Christian Aid explain the implications for Christian Aid:

Any organisation working to tackle global poverty needs to target the European Union. Not only do the European Commission and Member States together provide around half of global development aid funding, but they form one of the world's largest trading blocs, with trade relationships with many of the poorest countries in the world.

Christian Aid has for many years invested some of its resources in seeking to influence EU policy and practice on issues relevant to poverty eradication and sustainable development. We do this directly, but also with other agencies and by encouraging our supporters to raise issues with their MPs and MEPs. We work with MEPs from a range of political groups, proposing questions to be put to the Commission or Council, and providing briefings on policy issues. Where appropriate we lobby the Commission, on issues such as tax transparency, aid policy and climate change. Tax is an example: in 2008 Christian Aid pointed out that developing countries were losing \$160 billion each year through tax dodging, mainly by international companies. This sum is greater than the total aid being given to these countries, and deprives them of money needed for services such as health and education. Pressure from Christian Aid helped to lead eventually to a global campaign for tax justice, and in the EU for legislation requiring more transparency in corporate accounts and public registers of the real owners of companies, which should help developing countries recover the tax due to them.

When the UK finally leaves the European Union, this sort of direct contact could cease, but Christian Aid also works closely with our sister agencies Christian Aid Ireland and InspirAction in Spain and will still be able to influence the EU through them. We also have other channels for influencing European affairs, for example as members of the European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad) with whom we have done much of our work on tax justice.

One particularly important relationship is our membership of ACT (Action by Churches Together). ACT-EU - the European part of the global ACT Alliance – is a network of protestant church development agencies whose secretariat, based in Brussels, has significant expertise across EU policy issues such as development policy and sustainable agriculture. It is through them that we were able to achieve unexpectedly positive outcomes on carbon emissions and climate change at the recent Paris Conference. See <http://actalliance.org>. and www.actalliance.eu.

It is too early to be entirely sure how leaving the EU will affect our work. The biggest challenge of Brexit to Christian Aid so far has been the fluctuations in the value of sterling. Although we act prudently and secure some amount of foreign exchange, sterling is worth a lot less against the dollar than it was before the referendum outcome. This means our international programme costs are significantly higher than they were. The wider economic forecast does not look good, and that obviously has an impact on voluntary giving. Also, at present, Christian Aid applies for funding and contracts with the EU for work in emergencies and long term development, and there is now uncertainty about that in the future.

Leaving the EU should not influence the way we work in the field. We have about 500 partners around the world, ranging from national organizations demanding human rights and local groups advising on the prevention of malaria, to those delivering vital supplies to the victims of natural disasters. Some are faith-based and some not, but all work for people of all faiths and none.

The UK Government will now have to spend a huge amount of time on negotiating trade and other deals, and this risks further embedding an inward-looking rather than outward-looking agenda. This is worrying for Christian Aid as an agency concerned about development and the impact of policies on the poorest in the world. On some issues, such as tax, the UK has led the way in Europe; but there have been many instances where the UK has had to raise its ambition in order to fulfil EU requirements (for instance in labour and employment regulation and some environmental concerns) and there is no guarantee that it will maintain those high standards once outside the EU.

The UK may remain powerful through membership of bodies such as the G8 and G20, but it is unlikely that on its own it will have the economic and trading clout to play a major role on the global stage. Its exit from the EU will require the country to redefine its role in the world.

Whatever the outcome, Christian Aid will continue to work with its supporters, churches and networks to influence the Government to ensure that the UK remains an inclusive and outward looking nation, maintaining our country's values of fairness, justice, peace and love for our neighbour - particularly for those living in poor countries who are experiencing the injustice of extreme poverty.

www.christianaid.org.uk. Charity number 1105851

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Please let me know if you wish to be added to the mailing list or removed from it.

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