

At Bristol Methodist centre we are very aware that the building we have is a tool to help us deliver our work among the homeless and vulnerable of Bristol. We recognise the part that we play in helping people and also see the opportunity to welcome professionals from other organisations in to help us, add their part to help the ever growing needs among the homeless

Crafting a cardboard box into a comfortable night's sleep

Last October we were contacted by Elliot Lord about a project that he had started in the Midlands called Cardbeds. Using cardboard boxes that would otherwise be thrown away or at best recycled Elliot has designed a bed for the homeless. By effortlessly interlocking the pre-cut pieces it can be assembled into a sturdy bed within minutes. They come apart just as quickly making it easy to carry around.

Through conversations with homeless people, Elliot discovered that of the many hardships they faced, one of the biggest is sleeping on the cold hard ground.

Elliot realised that it's not just uncomfortable, but can also result in numerous health issues.

Made entirely from recycled card and kept dry with plastic packaging, these beds can last for months and can be made anywhere. They are given away free to those in need and make a huge difference especially to those sleeping rough.

In January we hosted Bristol's first Cardbed workshop when 6 volunteers were able to make 2 beds in under 2 hours. We now have a supply of these beds which are available to rough sleepers. You can find out more about the project at cardbeds.org If you would like to host a workshop or volunteer to help make the Cardbed please contact Elliot direct via his website: www.cardbeds.org



The cutting



The assembling



The testing!

News from the shop

The Shop continues to thrive and we are grateful for all donations large and small and to all our customers.

The proceeds from the shop continue to support the work of the centre which welcomes new people every day.

If you have a few hours to spare and would like to join the amazing team of volunteers please contact the shop manager Sandi who will be happy to show what is involved and how to apply.

The shop now has a Facebook page where you can view some of the stock. Find us at 'Streetfolk charity shop'



Doing something small can make a big difference

A little goes a long way. This could be said in so many ways, and with so many people.

It's not always the huge or grand gestures. Big isn't always beautiful, especially when it comes to people and what we can do in the centre. Small things make a difference to people's lives. A smile, a chat, understanding, empathy and compassion. Stopping and having a cup of tea, sharing a chat over biscuits.

In my position I am aware of my limitations, and the restraints placed upon me, in the role I have. I could easily get upset at how little I can do to make a difference in people's lives, but that wouldn't achieve anything.

I cannot give people accommodation, hurry up their benefits, bring people together, or make people better. Instead I can do my best and make the difference that I can.



A coat with a zip that does up, very important if you are sleeping out.

With the generosity of people who donate to us, we can give many homeless people a sleeping bag, and recently tents have been given out.

So often it is just a warm welcome, a smiley face, being relaxed and letting people know, that actually we really do care.... It's not just a job that we do.

Debbie Green



TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING

During January we were approached by the find and treat team (based at University College London Hospital), about the possibility of hosting a mobile TB clinic here at the Bristol Methodist Centre. Homeless people, those with substance abuse issues, refugees, migrants and ex-prisoners are particularly at risk of TB. Many of the Centre guests don't have easy access to health care and would possibly not attend a hospital for such screening. The symptoms would not be obvious to a person rough sleeping as they could easily be masked by their lifestyle. Early detection and treatment is vital for a full recovery. We had concerns about the after care for those whose x-ray would not be normal but with assurances that support was in place we were delighted to be able to host the mobile unit. There were a few issues about whether or not the van would be able to get down Lincoln street due to the number of cars parked but with skilful negotiation, a van similar to this arrived at about 9am on February 21st and set up ready to start the screening at mid-

day. They screened about 70 people over the 2 hour period with most being re-assured that all was well. It involved a quick x-ray (fully clothed) with almost immediate results.

Good quality healthcare can be a challenge for people living on the streets and we are so grateful that we were able to be part of the screening that took place across the city centre over 2 days.

