



## **Together4Bristol: Whole of Life or Spheres of Life Annual Report 2022**

### **1. Introduction**

This has been a very busy year for Together4Bristol's Spheres of Life (T4B), as we help transform Bristol from a tale of two cities, to a City of Hope! It has also been a year of rebuilding in a couple of the spheres, as we emerge from the pandemic. Below are some highlights from all that has happened!

### **2. Whole of Life**

a) Roger Allen stopped in November 2021, as the Enabler of Mission and Unity, to focus on facilitating the spheres work across the Whole of Life (for about a dozen hours a week),  
b) There have been various gatherings for Christians in the different spheres of life. These spheres are Sport, Health, Education, Family, Politics and Social Action (Christian Action Bristol, or CAB), Arts, Media, and Business and Workplace.

### **3. Politics and Social Action sphere, called Christian Action Bristol (CAB), is led by**

**Andy Street.** a) **Colse Leung** has done excellent work through the CAB website and social media (with a Facebook page with over 560 followers) and across all 14 of the specific areas of social action supported by CAB. This includes the support of those impacted by addiction; those struggling with debt (principally through the work of Christians Against Poverty); those seeking housing (temporary shelter, and move-on accommodation); those caught up in the criminal justice system (supporting those in prison, and upon release into the community – through Sixty-One, and other charities); women caught up in modern day slavery through the sex-trade (through Beloved, and One25); refugees and asylum seekers and others.

b) There has continued to be considerable engagement with the Mayor, Marvin Rees, and the council by the Christian community, especially through CAB and Andy Street . At a recent Zoom gathering of the City Office, 40 out of 400 participants were from the Christian community. For example, March saw the launch, with over 40 church leaders, of the Good Faith Partnership's Bristol Churches Recovery Renewal Report – a report commissioned by CAB.

c) From February 2022 CAB has worked with the Good Faith Partnership and Love Bristol (in Poland), to lead the Bristol churches' response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. Alongside hosts providing temporary accommodation for nearly 800 refugees (mainly women and children), 15 'Welcome Hubs' have been set up by churches, commissioned by Bristol City Council and supported by Bridges for Communities and the Bristol Hospitality Network. This is a unique multi-agency / multi-sector collaborative effort.

d) Over the Summer CAB, alongside the Good Faith Partnership, has led the setting up of a network of 'Welcoming Spaces' located at churches across the city to support those people struggling with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. This is an initiative instigated by Bristol City Council, alongside a range of partners, including the Church. Over 20 churches have come forward to host a Welcoming Space, and by November 16 were opening their doors on a weekly basis; the rest will follow soon.

e) A couple of other social action initiatives across the Christian community were:

The [Bristol Churches Winter Night Shelter](#) from November 2021 to March 2022. There were 150 volunteers, from 34 different churches. And The [Noise 2022](#) (May Bank Holiday), which showed God's love in practical ways. Over 700 volunteers from 45 churches took part in 60 practical community projects in 19 neighbourhoods of Bristol. See a video for more details. [Noise 365](#) takes this vision into every day of the year.

f) In October the [Bristol Churches City Fund](#), opened for applications from charities across the city seeking to support those impacted by food poverty / insecurity. A total pot of £40,000 has been set aside for distribution, with a relaunch in the New Year. Overall, it has been a very busy year for CAB, but with excellent progress and impact.

**4. Arts sphere, or Kingdom Creatives (or KiC, facilitated by Erica Bebb)**, has flourished over the last year, with about 325 creatives linked to it. There have been: Weekly Monday mornings Zoom prayer / reflection gatherings (8.00-8.30am) delivered by KiC Steering Group members and these are central to listening to God and group fellowship.

Recommencement of open meetings for any local creatives to attend held at St Edyth's Church, Sea Mills. Rev Erica Bebb recently spoke at St Stephens church Bristol to share with a Christian arts group.

Creation of artwork for prayer tents deployed at the Bristol Diocese Retreat for ministers. This included golden banners and one tent with artwork on the theme of Psalm 23. Also Malcolm Bourne's prophetic art, such as 'Covenant' at [Joseph Studios](#) filmed by KiC's Will Gowers, for the *From Darkness to Light* exhibition in Bristol Cathedral. Malcolm also painted live at the Sutton Benger arts festival.

The hosting of a touring YWAM parkour team providing outreach in Bristol and free sports events in the wider South West, through Phil Goldney the Europe lead for [Christian Freesports](#).

Assistance in management of the successful Bristol Recovery Festival through Dr Clare Fleming, plus continuing our therapeutic artwork for the those recovering from homelessness.

**5. Media sphere** has struggled over the pandemic, without a facilitator. A recent prayer gathering on Zoom, in partnership with Christians in Media, needed to be postponed. The Media sphere will engage more closely with the Arts sphere for support in the future.

**6. Business and Workplace sphere (facilitated by Jez Sweetland**, with Tim Simpson as prayer co-ordinator) has had fortnightly prayer on the Upper Reaches Barge. There are about 30 Christian Workplace Groups, facilitated by Mal Shaw of [Transform Work UK](#), supported by a WhatsApp group and monthly Zoom calls. Jez and the Bristol Housing Festival team, have continued with pioneering work. The core team is being reformed, following Guy West's sad death, and a couple of retirements, including Tim Simpson as co-facilitator.

**7. Education sphere (facilitated by Jane Gillis)** works closely with Bristol Schools Connection and other organisations encouraging Christians' to 'be and do church' in our school communities. A group from the sphere meets regularly to pray for a growing number of Christians involved in Education across Bristol. Prayerfully encouraging these Christians in their God given work roles is a key focus for this sphere. The sphere works with other spheres, such as KiC ([The Shining Like Stars](#) film), and the council, (with CAB) to help churches connect with Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) to provide mentors in deprived schools (about 8 so far).

**8. Family sphere (called Love Family) is co-facilitated by Sarah Abell and Stu Dendy.**

Jane Auld retired, after leading the sphere and National Parenting Initiative (NPI), in a pioneering way. Love Family is well connected with Relationships Academy, Home for Good, Parent Buddies, NPI, Kids Matter, Mullers and several other charities and organisations. Stu Dendy (co-facilitator), is the Bristol Coordinator for Home for Good, promoting the need for fostering, adoption and supported lodgings in the city. In response to the council's request for emergency fostering, with CAB's help, 30 Christian couples are now fostering (see this film). Love Family's core group met in person each term and once a month online, to pray for the various family initiatives and charities in the city.

**9. Health sphere (co-facilitated by Clare Fleming and Sheena Tranter)** has a weekly morning prayer hour, seeking Jesus's wisdom for releasing healing and deliverance across this region. Bristol Healing Rooms offer zoom and in-person prayer every week in venues across Bristol. A conference was hosted, with Chuck Parry of Bethel Healing School. Several training weekends were held in the Brecon Beacons. A team also manned a healing room at a conference in Jerusalem. Close links have been developed between the Health Sphere and Arts Sphere, as creativity can be a key part of inner healing. There are a growing number of Christian Workplace Groups in hospitals, such as Southmead. Many people have been healed and delivered throughout the year!

**10. Sport sphere (co-facilitated by Akeel Yousaf and Grant Sheppard)** links several Sport charities across Bristol and Bath, such as World Sport Ministries, Christians in Sport and Christian Surfers and Skaters, with occasional prayer gatherings, such as in the summer, linking more widely, for example with the chaplains involved with Bristol Sport.

**11. Together4Bristol**

a) T4B connects with the Gather Movement, which links about 150 "unity for mission movements" across the UK. Roger, with Andy Street and Sheena Tranter, are part of the wider team. Andy and CAB helped set up Christian Action Brighton. Roger was interviewed at Gather Movement's Summit in June and by London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (**LICC**), to explore how the Christian community across Bristol is engaging increasingly across the whole of life. LICC celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Bristol in October. A small group was formed in June to help church leaders and the spheres work more closely to help release everyday Christians across the whole of life. Also, Roger has been involved in over 20 podcasts, called "Empowering You for Purpose!" across the spheres

b) The Together4Bristol website was created by Mark Orriss and is updated by Adam Hudson, including events and articles connected to the spheres, with each sphere having its own page on the website. T4B's monthly enewsletter is sent to over 1,700, with about 900 members of T4B's Facebook group. A "100 Friends Appeal" will be launched for the website and social media to be financially sustainable.



