

Friary Drop-In News



www.friarydrop-in.org.uk

Autumn 2011

From the Chair of Trustees

I write this piece as my last as Chair of the Trustees and as a member of the Board. At the last AGM I indicated to the Trustees that this would be my last year as Chair, and I will be standing down at the AGM in October. To enable my successor to have a clear run at the task of being Chair, I also intend to stand down from the Board.

When I began to think about this piece I tried to remember how long it is since I first became involved in Friary Drop-In. At the time, I was a solicitor practising in West Bridgford and I found a steady stream of clients coming in for advice about housing problems, benefits and family breakdown. When I asked how it was they had come to me, they told me that Ann had sent them from Friary Drop-In.

Now, I didn't know Ann and I had never heard of Friary Drop-In, so I called in one Friday morning and found the centre buzzing with people. I spoke to Ann and I didn't look back from then. Before I knew it, I was attending a management committee meeting and I seem to have stayed involved since then.

At the time, the organisation was still on a small scale run by volunteers from Friary Church and other local churches. There were

no paid employees and it really was a true community project run by people within the community of West Bridgford for the homeless and vulnerable amongst that community.

Since then there have been many changes. It was clear that the Drop-In was providing valuable support to statutory agencies and we began to generate income of our own to provide additional services for our visitors. We registered as an independent charity and began to have paid workers. The service provided to our visitors expanded and we employed professional staff to administer the organisation.

For all the changes that there have undoubtedly been, the Drop-In remains very similar to how it was that day when I first walked in the door. The organisation is now run more professionally, with paid staff and a bigger income. It is still noisy and buzzing and full of people. Some of those people could well have been there on my first visit, whether as visitors or volunteers. Ann is still there, whatever time of day you may visit!

It remains a true community project, still supported by Friary Church and other local churches. It now supports many others who live beyond the boundaries of West Bridgford, in the City of Nottingham and elsewhere. The

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Drop-In will always depend on the goodwill of the people of West Bridgford.

I am proud to have been part of the organisation for so many years and I hope that I have been able to make a difference to those who visit the Centre and depend on the services we provide. We live in uncertain financial times, but I am sure that Friary Drop-In, with the support of the staff whose efforts are so greatly appreciated, my fellow Trustees and the many volunteers and supporters, will continue to thrive and provide a unique and valued service within our community.



New Challenges

The last six months have brought with them new challenges to Friary Drop-In as the anticipated progressive effects of the nationwide financial crisis continue to further disadvantage those most vulnerable. Friary Drop-In has encountered, first hand, the real life cost of the recession and the cost has been substantial.

In July 2011 we catered for 269 advice sessions with people of no fixed abode. Contrast this figure to that of July 2010, which was 190, and you will see that there has been an increase of 42% in the number of homeless people accessing our advice. This has a knock-on effect to our service, as people without accommodation often require more regular support as a result of not having the security of a home. For example, in July 2011, we supplied 259 'non-cooking' food parcels to those in crisis without any access to cooking facilities. Contrast this figure with the same month the previous year, which was 138, and you begin to comprehend the extent of the crisis.

This increase in the number of 'non-cooking' food parcels can be attributed to a variety of interconnected socio-economic factors. These factors include:

- the increase in energy prices, leading to an increase in Fuel Poverty, thus restricting people's ability to cook and provide for themselves.

- the increase in the number of people attending our sessions who have no entitlement to benefit and therefore no accommodation or income, i.e. A8 nationals with little or no employment history. We encountered 207 visits from A8 state nationals (most from Poland) in July 2011.
- the DWP's implementation of more coercive sanctions on benefit claimants who do not comply with their obligations, leading to more people on exceptionally low incomes for longer periods of time, and the closure of many social accommodation services around the Nottingham area, leading to a lack of affordable or available accommodation.

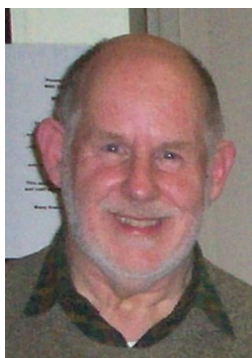
The challenge for us at Friary Drop-In is not simply to observe the nature of the need, but rather to be responsive to it in how we develop and deliver our services.

It is an arduous task to cater for an increasing need, when we are operating within a sector that is encountering many service closures. However, we are determined that, with the support of the local community and the commitment of staff and volunteers, that we can work together to make a real difference in the lives of those who need the services provided by Friary Drop-In.

It is my hope that this time next year I will be able to quote a reduction in the number of people needing food parcels, because less people are in crisis.

*Sam Crawford
Business Manager*

Norman Dobbs - Trustee



I have represented Friary United Reformed Church on the Board of Trustees over the past five years, since my retirement from the Building Services Industry. I have been a member of Friary Church for over 40 years and an Elder for most of that time.

I also have responsibility for maintenance of the church buildings, which are over 110 years old and

grade II listed. It seems I attend more meetings now than when I was at work!

I am married and have two daughters and three grandchildren with a fourth grandchild due any day now. When I do get time for myself, I enjoy water colour painting, Sudoku, listening to music, theatre-going and, of course, child-minding in Nottingham and Bristol. The M5 is very familiar!

*Norman Dobbs
Trustee*

Friends of Friary Drop-In

At committee meetings for the Friends of Friary, we review past fundraising events and preview what we have got planned for the following year. The review is important; we concentrate on what was successful and what we would like to change next time round. Over the last couple of years we have held concerts, quiz nights, fashion shows, exhibitions, pack-a-bag, carol singing and a garden party. We were particularly pleased with the pack-a-bag event at Morrison's this year, as it seemed to be successful on a number of fronts. The 10-12 helpers raised over £800 for Friary during the day. Many people commented on how well it was received by the general public and the opportunity it gave us to tell people about Friary, while we packed their bags and slipped them a Newsletter. We were all agreed that the publicity side of the fundraising

event was just as important as the money raised. Encouraged by this, we hope to run pack-a-bag next year at Sainsbury's and your support would be welcomed.

Outdoor events are great opportunities to promote Friary and to raise its profile as a local charity. Friary has had a DVD made to promote the organisation and the publicity group at Friary are aiming to refresh the publicity material for displays and handouts. Personal recommendations, through your own contacts, are invaluable: so please encourage your friends and family to support us where possible. All our fundraising events aim to provide memorable and enjoyable evenings. Our next event will be a Barn Dance - see details below.

Bernard Popham, Chair



Barn Dance at West Bridgford Baptist Church, junction of Melton/ Musters Rd

Sat 8th Oct at 7.30pm
With 'Fred's Folk'

Tickets £10 adults, £5 children under 12
(available from the Friary Drop-In Centre)

Includes Ploughman's Supper

Fashion Show at Holy Spirit Social Centre, Melton Rd, West Bridgford

Wed 23rd Nov at 7.30pm



Carol Singing at ASDA, Loughborough Rd, West Bridgford

Mon 19th Dec 7pm - 9pm

Become a 'Friend of Friary Drop-In'

- I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A FRIEND OF FRIARY DROP-IN - The Annual Subscription is a minimum of £10 (£5 for people unwaged)
- I ALSO ENCLOSE A DONATION OF £.....
- I AM A UK TAXPAYER & I AM INTERESTED IN DONATING VIA **GIFT AID**
(if you are a UK taxpayer and wish to make any donations, we can benefit from the tax reclaimed, currently 25p for every £1 you donate, please tick the box and we will send you further details).

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TEL NO:

E-MAIL:

'Thank You'

A big 'Thank You' to everyone who supported our recent events and sales. We raised the following amounts for Friary's funds:

Bargain Sale

on 6th Aug: £3,071

Concert at St Giles

on 11th Jun: £714

Bargain Sale

on 4th Jun: £3,125

Selby Open Gardens

7th/8th May: £3,276

Morrison's Bag Pack

8th May: £817

Friends of Friary Coffee Week:

£377

Concert at St Giles



The next

Bargain Sales

will be at
the Drop-In Centre,
from 10 am - noon,
on:

Sat 26th Nov

and

Sat 7th Jan '12



What is Friary Drop-In?

Friary Drop-In exists to help local people who are homeless, living in temporary accommodation or vulnerable from long-term unemployment.

Friary Drop-In offers free services such as information, advice, access to health services, tenancy support and employment skills. Recreational, educational, and leisure time pursuits, along with essential social welfare provision, adds to our Visitors' quality of life.

Friary Drop-In is a faith-based organisation receiving substantial support from local churches and community. Friary Drop-In is open to people of all faiths and beliefs or none.

Facilities and Services Available

- ◇ Access to health services, including GP and chiropody
- ◇ Confidential information and advice
- ◇ Practical welfare provision
- ◇ Shower and laundry
- ◇ Hairdressing/Barber
- ◇ Café offering soup, snacks and drinks
- ◇ Outreach services
- ◇ Table games, pool table, books, newspapers
- ◇ Tenancy Support
- ◇ Crèche
- ◇ Sunday Evening Fellowship

Where To Find Us

www.friarydrop-in.org.uk

FRIARY DROP-IN OPENING TIMES

MONDAY
WEDNESDAY
FRIDAY
9.00 am – 1.00 pm

SUNDAY EVENING
FELLOWSHIP
8.00 pm – 9.00 pm

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Nottingham NG2 7PR

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