

**THE PARK BENCH
GENERAL MEETING**

7.30 Thursday 10 July at 9 Nottingham Street Bristol BS3 4SS

Minutes

1. Greetings and introductions

Present at meeting: Stella, Heather, Linda, Lucy

Apologies: Richard

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the meeting on 10 April were read and approved.

For developments at the Compass Centre see below.

Heather had a recorded interview with Nicola on 23 May in Cardiff. There has been no further news yet, but Nicola should report back on the results of her thesis in the future.

3. Treasurer's report.

Richard reported that there have been no significant movements since the last meeting. The balance in the bank account stands at £439.18 at 12 June 2008.

The difference with the last balance includes spending on new plastic boxes.

4. Operations

Apologies that the statistics for the first quarter of 2008 – given at the last meeting - were not accurate. There was a slight under-reporting of the number of people at New Street.

Figures for this quarter are attached to these minutes.

New Street

Rumours of New Street closing seem unfounded. The sanitary facilities have been renovated and reopened. The numbers have picked up: the library was a little busier than the first quarter this year and than the same time last year, though not as busy as in the first year. This may be due to the loss of novelty value.

We saw a lot of variation in the number of visits and books borrowed each week. The number of new clients remained fairly constant, but the number of returning clients has dropped since the first year we opened. These figures reflect the centre as a whole. It was suggested that clients may be coming for a shorter time.

Ian, a New Street client, asked if he could become a volunteer. Heather will take in a form on 11 July.

The rota was confirmed for August to October.

The Salvation Army hostel.

There seems to have been a reversal of fortunes between New Street and the Salvation Army since the last quarter.

We saw half the number of visitors compared to the first quarter. Numbers dropped off significantly in the second half of June. This may be due to the football or to seasonal variation.

Other libraries & bookshelves

We have, or are planning, a bookshelf at

a. The Big Issue offices

Nothing to report.

b. Townsend House (women's hostel)

c. The Well

d. One25

Heather continues to make regular visits to all these places..

e. Southmead Hospital (not yet in action, but can use spare books)

Julie Northall requested books for psychiatric patients and came to select and pick them up in the first week of July. Heather offered to refresh the shelves at regular intervals.

f. Compass Centre (night centre, Jamaica Street)

Heather contacted Mark Bearcroft who expressed an interest in a library.

Heather has not heard anything from him since, but will wait a little longer for him to renew contact.

b) Book movements

We have no shortage of books. More books are currently available from the Amnesty bookshop. Heather will take some to Townsend House.

There have been several book donations from borrowers, mainly from the Salvation Army.

There was a renewed offer of help to move books.

5. AOB.

The issue of the number of volunteers was raised. We seem to have about the right number of volunteers and have not had to miss any weeks.

Some volunteers have expressed an interest in doing more.

It was suggested that we could buy more reading glasses for visitors.

There have been frequent requests for quick reads and graphic novels. There is a low rate of return for these and few donations. Linda suggested buying some. Stella mentioned that

quick reads are available in Asda for £1.99 each. Graphic novels are available from Bookworks, and we could also look for them in second-hand bookshops.

Thanks were given to Linda for producing the statistics, to Heather for her hospitality and Lucy for taking notes..

6. Next meeting

Thursday 9 October 2008 19:30 at 9 Nottingham Street