

CHURCH ON THE BUS

Newsletter March 2017

Editor's Comments

When we decided to send out a twice yearly newsletter, beginning with this one, we started by looking at previous Church On The Bus newsletters to see what had been said and done in the past. As the project started in 2004 there was plenty to see and a number of faces kept appearing that are familiar and include many that are still involved in one way or another, even in spirit in some cases.

We therefore decided to dedicate this first issue to old and current friends, to give a flavour of the history of this great project which is still going strong and helping the vulnerable and needy of Chesterfield and North Derbyshire.



The day the Archbishop came to town

In September 2011 the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, came to Chesterfield to open the new Parish Centre at St Thomas', where Church on the Bus has its office base. He then visited the bus and met Captain Alan Park and other members and visitors to the Bus to get a flavour of the fine work being done. Alan has moved on to pastures new and the Bus is now entirely volunteer-run, but the principles on which the project was founded by Alan in 2004 still hold good.

Fundraising

From the start the Bus has relied on fundraising to keep it running and we came across this photo of Ann Hoare with a stall for this purpose in 2012. Ann is still involved and makes sandwiches on a regular basis, along with 8 other groups of people on the rota. In the same issue was a photo of Jane Talbot,

with thanks to the generosity of the Path Lab at Chesterfield Royal Hospital for providing items of clothing for distribution from the Bus. Jane is also still making sandwiches for the Bus.





Visit to Kenya

In 2014 two of our volunteers, Dawn and Shearer, funded their own trip to work in an orphanage in Kenya. This provided them both with an incredible opportunity to work with and help deprived children and was a life-changing experience for them. Dawn has gone on to work with the Church Army and Shearer is still a Trustee, committee member and volunteer for the Bus.

Contributions from local churches



Along with St Thomas', who are very generous to us with their facilities and services, we are supported by a number of local churches. One such organisation is Dore Church in Sheffield, who have very recently sent us a cheque to assist with our general running costs. This links with a photo from our January 2012 newsletter, which shows the men's group from Dore Church on a sponsored walk from Dore to Chesterfield to raise money for us.

Contact US

Church on the Bus
c/o St Thomas' Church,
Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield,
S40 3AW

Wedding in Matlock

In 2013 an incredibly moving event occurred in Matlock. Two of the regular attendees at the Bus, Shaun and Jo, fell in love and decided to get married. The Matlock volunteers organised the Matlock Methodist/United Reformed Church to put together a wedding service for them, Rob Stoba (volunteer) was their best man and the Reverend Colin Smith took the service. Members of the congregation provided a wedding dress, food and a purpose-made wedding cake. A great day was had by all!



Art Group

Three years ago we started an Art Group, with the specific intention of encouraging the homeless and needy to mix with others in the context of something they enjoyed to do. Previously this was out of their reach, financially and socially, due to their personal isolation or chaotic lifestyles. It has proved an outstanding success and, thanks to a 2-year grant from the People's Health Lottery, we hold 3 groups a week in Chesterfield and have produced calendars and Easter cards from the original artwork produced at the group.

Some of the attendees have been helped to the extent that they now volunteer on the Bus and all have expressed their delight in attending the group they describe as 'family', in some cases the only family they have. The grant for this runs out in July this year and we are hoping to allow it to continue by getting more people to fill in Standing Orders to support the fine results being achieved. Please see our website or leave a voice message on 01246 558461 with your name and address so we can send you the Standing Order details. Alternatively email carolyn.baker@st-thomas-brampton.org