



## **Together4Bristol: Whole (or Spheres) of Life Annual Report 2023**

### **1. Introduction**

This has been a very busy year for [Together4Bristol](#) (T4B)'s Whole (or Spheres) of Life, 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!

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

- a) Roger Allen facilitates the spheres across the Whole of Life (one day a week voluntary).
- b) 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 and a group of others**

- a) CAB highlights engagement opportunities on [YouTube](#), through the [CAB website](#) and social media (with a Facebook page with about 600 followers, Twitter with about 865 and Instagram with 960) across 7 sectors of social action – support for those in poverty; homelessness and housing; refugees and asylum seekers; the criminal justice system; community development and cohesion; environment and creation care; and human trafficking / vulnerable women. CAB held a City of Hope conference at Elim Church in June with about 170 people
- 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. With the change in city governance from May 2024 (from an elected mayor to a committee system), CAB is working to ensure the Christian community is best able to continue to work with the Council in various areas of social need across the city.
- c) CAB has worked with the Good Faith Partnership (GFP) to lead the Bristol churches' response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis. 15 'Welcome Hubs' have been set up by churches, helping about 600 people. GFP has also co-ordinated a response to the recent influx of asylum seekers to the city, by setting up a 'Hub' in Stokes Croft to support those located in a city-centre hotel.
- d) CAB and the [GFP](#) (with Bristol City Council), set up Welcoming Spaces in 33 churches across the city to support those people struggling with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, who cannot afford both eating and heating. These will reopen this autumn / winter.
- e) A couple of other social action initiatives across the Christian community were: The [Bristol Churches Shelter](#), from November 2022 to March 2023, with 150 volunteers. And The Noise 2023 (May Bank Holiday), which showed God's love in practical ways, with over 650 volunteers from 47 churches, doing 65 projects. See a video for more details. [Noise 365](#) takes this vision into every day of the year.
- f) From October 2022 the [Bristol Churches City Fund](#), distributed £40,000 to support those impacted by food poverty / insecurity and the asylum seeker Hub. It will raise funds next, for the network of Welcoming Spaces.

**4. Arts sphere, or Kingdom Creatives (KiC), facilitated by Malcolm Bourne), has flourished over the last year, linked to about 325 creatives. Rev Erica Bebb, who founded KiC, retired in 2023. A partnership is being formalised with [Joseph Studios](#). Wider gatherings of creatives will then restart. The KiC steering group meets weekly on Zoom: listening to God, discerning direction, and for fellowship. KiC members have taken part in a wide variety of creative projects across the region (see their [map](#)).**

**5. Media sphere** has engaged more closely with the [Arts](#) sphere and [Christians in Media](#), for a gathering in May, called "[Theology: the Art of Storytelling](#)", a very enriching time for about 50 people, and for a first [Bristol Media Hub](#) in October.

**6. Business and Workplace sphere (facilitated by Jez Sweetland)** has had fortnightly prayer on the Upper Reaches Barge (led by Tim Simpson). There are about 30 Christian Workplace Groups,

facilitated by Mal Shaw of [Transform Work](#). The core team continues to explore how best to support engagement with workplace groups and the wider agenda of business as a force for social justice and transformation.

**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. The sphere works with CAB, to help churches connect with Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) to provide mentors in deprived schools (about 8 so far) and with the Family Sphere, promoting the work of Kids Matter in a school community context.

**8. Family sphere (called Love Family)** is co-facilitated by Sarah Abell and Stu Dendy. Love Family is inspired by all things family. As a sphere, we look to connect across the churches and Christian groups, with our focus on supporting and caring for the various elements of family. We recognise that prayer is significant in ministry and so we pray regularly together via Zoom, on Mondays at 8am. We also have an in-person time of prayer each term. We are pleased to be partnered with Parent Buddies, Kids Matter, Mullers, Safe Families (a very new addition), Relationships Academy (Sarah Abell) and Home for Good (Stu Dendy). We desire to grow this network, and are prayerfully considering a special "one off" event, to celebrate Love Family in 2024

**9. Health sphere (co-facilitated by Clare Fleming and Sheena Tranter)**. There is a weekly morning prayer hour, seeking Jesus' wisdom for releasing healing and deliverance across this region. Bristol Healing Rooms offer in-person prayer most weeks in various venues, or outside at College Green and Broadmead. Teams manned Healing Rooms at conferences in Jerusalem, Hong Kong, Kenya, Uganda, Northern Ireland and USA. There was a Healing conference led by Marc DuPont at Trinity College and six retreats in the Brecon Beacons on healing, deliverance, the Father's heart and prophetic worship. There are close links between the Health and Arts spheres, since creativity can be a key part of inner healing. There are a growing number of Christian Workplace Groups in hospitals, such as Southmead and the BRI. Many people have been healed and delivered throughout the year.

**10. Sport sphere (co-facilitated by Akeel Yousaf and Grant Sheppard)** connects several Sport charities across Bristol and Bath, such as World Sport Ministries, Christians in Sport and Christian Surfers and Skaters. Occasional prayer gatherings, such as in the summer, link 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. Roger was interviewed for a recent [Learning Community](#) podcast exploring T4B's pioneering work with the spheres. A small group (linked to [LICC](#)) continued 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 25 podcasts, called "[Empowering You for Purpose!](#)" across the spheres and has launched the [Reframe](#) course, with a small group, as a pilot scheme.

b) The [Together4Bristol website](#) was created by **Mark Orriss** and is updated by **Adam Hudson**, including events, articles, jobs and volunteering opportunities connected to the spheres. Each sphere has its own page on the website. T4B's monthly e-newsletter is sent to over 1,700, with about 940 members on T4B's [Facebook](#) group and over 500 followers on [Twitter](#) (updated by Philip Nott). A "100 Friends Appeal" has raised £1.6k towards its target of £5k, for the website and social



media to become financially sustainable.

