

# CAP UPDATE – March 2016



**We are getting ready for the opening of the new CAP Debt Centre operating from Bridgnorth Baptist Church with a launch service on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 10.00am when Diane Kruczek will be visiting us. Diane is the Centre Manager for CAP Wolverhampton and will be supporting us as our area manager.**

Janet Sharples and Ruth Smith attended the CAP central offices in Bradford for two days of training at the end of February. From April Janet will be working two days a week as our Centre Manager. Her main job is to be the link between us and the CAP team in Bradford. Anyone seeking help must apply directly online to CAP UK who will forward details of prospective clients to Janet. She will then arrange home visits to gather information and provide initial support to the client. Using the information that Janet has collected, the CAP central team will draw together a personal plan for each client that will lift the burden of their debt and set them on the road towards becoming debt free. We expect to be asked to take on two new clients each month from April forward.

It is our job to make sure that information about the service reaches the people who most need it. This is where Ruth's role is really important. Ruth will support Janet in publicising the service and providing information to all the various agencies and support groups who will know where the most urgent needs are. A good example of this might be the arrears teams working for the local council and housing agencies. Janet and Ruth have a long list of contacts to follow up through the first months that the centre will be operating. We also expect to work closely with the Food Bank who have said that they can help in providing food parcels and emergency support in the first weeks while assessments are being made and plans drawn up.

We will need help from lots of others across the church too. Janet and Ruth will be inviting people to join one or more of four separate teams of helpers. Janet will need someone to accompany her on the initial visits to new clients. This is important first to ensure that Janet is not exposed to personal risk when going into the home of someone that we do not yet have a relationship with. It is also helpful to have someone with Janet to make sure that she is free to give her full attention to the prospective client by perhaps by making a cup of tea or helping to occupy any children in the home. Ruth will be able to help with this, but Janet will need others that she can call on.

The second group of people will be those who can offer friendship and encouragement to the clients as they face the challenge of keeping to a closely managed budget. They will need to have a good listening ear and be ready offer prayer when appropriate. Our hope is that people will be saved and come into a living relationship with Jesus through our service. Befrienders should be ready to give their own testimony and help people to take the first step of faith in giving their life to Jesus. They will encourage clients to come to church or to small groups where they will meet other Christians. CAP share hundreds of testimonies of people who have become Christians in this way.

The third group is new to us at BBC and is called a Blessings Team. CAP have found that it can be a great lift and encouragement to clients to receive a gift or share a special treat from time to time, especially when the going seems tough. This might, for example, be a gift of a homemade cake or chocolates, and invitation to go to see a film, or a shopping trip to buy some new clothes. It might be as simple as sending a card and small gift to mark a birthday or anniversary. CAP provide a budget to cover the cost of these special gifts.

The fourth group includes those who will give time to pray regularly for the clients, and indeed for Janet and Ruth. Those joining this group will be privy to confidential information about the clients and CAP requires that members of this team sign a confidentiality agreement with CAP.

So – exciting times with lots to pray about and lots of ways to contribute. We will keep you posted with more updates as we have news to share.

Donovan Gibbons