



Dear BESOM friends and supporters –

I do hope the fun and joy over Christmas and New Year hasn't been dampened too much by the rain and grey skies over these last few weeks – but Spring is on its way, and we see the evidence in the trees and hedgerows.

However, for some of the people we reach out to their grey days are more than just the weather. Just after our last Christmas newsletter went out, we had the most beautiful message from one of our trustees who wrote:

“I was delivering Christmas hampers, and I took one to a lady living by herself. She was completely overcome with emotion when she saw the hamper and said no-one ever gave her presents.....”

BESOM is a total lifeline to so many struggling to make ends meet.

In January, we heard how BESOM had helped a single guy with bedding whose referrer wrote:

“I wanted to say thank you for the bedding you have provided for my client. He was very appreciative when I delivered it and planned to sleep in his bed last night for the first time in two years”

Since BESOM first took on helping to provide flooring/carpeting a year ago, we now have an increasing demand. Unfortunately, it would seem that

the council/various housing organisations are obliged to obey rules to rip out the flooring of previous tenants for health reasons. Not only is this expensive (apparently to dump carpets in a tip can cost a considerable sum) but it means that many of the people we are referred have had no flooring for weeks – sometimes



months – with small children crawling/walking on concrete floors.

So particular thanks to those of you who have given rugs/carpets – and even cash for such purposes. There are two BESOM volunteers who are getting to grips with the flooring and carpet project and bringing a bit of colour and warmth to hard concrete floors. We've learnt a lot about flooring and now know our limits(!); for example, that fitting lino in a hallway needs expertise !! *Windrush Flooring* have been so helpful, and a good relationship has been built up; they often reduce the price for us or do not charge for delivery. Also, they are willing to fit but not stick the carpet to the floors – in this way when the client moves to another area they can then take the carpet with them. A decision will need to be taken by the trustees later this year as to whether we can continue once the current funds allocated to flooring are used up.



We have been contacted by Welcome Church (Witney) for literature about what we do. Their outreach team are holding a fun day full of activities, crafts and most importantly the *Easter story* on *Saturday 28th March*. There will be a stall sharing resources of various different Christian charities.



This year we celebrate twenty years since Witney BESOM became established as part of the larger BESOM organisation. BESOM has had many fine leaders – and we continue to go from strength to strength. Earlier this week we held our AGM and were thrilled that Roger Habgood (Chair of the national BESOM network) could join us.



We are so grateful for all the churches that are involved with BESOM across the Witney area. Please do contact us if you know of anyone who would like to join us in the work we do.



Yours in Him,

Jo

Jo Hockley – on behalf of The Besom in Witney

PS As usual, if you no longer wish to receive these newsletters, or wish them to be sent to a different email address, then please get in touch (jo@witneybesom.org).