

2009 began with the achievement of another real milestone, the opening of the second CBS branch office on 7th January. This allowed CBS to increase the scope of operation to 5 days each week (Monday to Friday from 7 until 10p.m.) which is another step towards our objective of being open for those who need us every day of the week. Over time we have the objective of emulating our "parent" organisation, by being available to listen whenever someone is in distress or despair, or suicidal, 24 hours each day. However, that day is a long way off and 2009 will and must be a year of consolidation for CBS.

The major objectives we have set for this year are:

1 Increase awareness of the CBS service within the English-speaking community.

The objective here is to increase access to the service by those who need us. We will measure success by an increase in call rates to levels we anticipate when extrapolated from both U.K. demographics and call rates achieved by Samaritans in the U.K. We have begun this work by the creation of a communications plan which is now being reviewed by all volunteers who will be invited to be part of the programme. We have begun a major publicity campaign using newspaper, radio and the web, together with a CBS presence at major ex-pat events.

2 Build volunteer experience to reduce organisational dependence upon a few key individuals.

More and more volunteers are assuming roles in CBS over and above the critical role of Listener. Building operational experience by driving up the call rate will allow this trend to continue. CBS intends to develop its volunteers and to allow the development of succession plans for all key roles within the organisation. Increasing the number of people able to serve in managerial and specialist functions is seen as critical and healthy for the development of a democratic organisation.

3 Recruitment and training of more Listening Volunteers

The only limitations on expansion of CBS service to callers are the number of trained, active volunteers that we have and money. I am pleased to note that we already have enough volunteers in our pipe-line to fill the first two training courses planned for 2009. By mid 2009 we expect to have an additional 20 trained listening volunteers. Our advertising campaigns will continue to attract new volunteers and we intend to move to a system of recruitment open-days to simplify and enhance our selection process.

4 Continue and improve our funding-raising work to underpin service expansion.

CBS has been fortunate to attract the financial support of a number of individuals and organisations over the last 12 months and we are fortunate to be able to say that we can cover our financial commitments over the next 12 months. However, we need to work to continue to attract more funding to allow expansion of the service, particularly through campaigns to raise awareness of Samaritan work within our target communities. Once again our volunteers are spontaneously supporting this initiative with their own ideas and projects.