



## NEWSLETTER - July 2016

### From the Chair and the Board

*Dear friend and colleagues,*

It is amazing that we are already so far into 2016 and it is some months now since you received the last BW newsletter. I am therefore writing to let you know about some exciting developments in the BW world.

#### **Call sharing between Australia and New Zealand**

In December 2015 our friends in Australia and New Zealand introduced a call sharing system using Voice over IP (internet) technology. This now enables 24/7 cover for all calls to our Centres in these countries. The attached document provides further details of how this project has worked and early results.

#### **Youth Line Lithuania 25th Anniversary**

In 2016 Youth Line Lithuania is celebrating its 25th Anniversary and this was marked by the presentation of a special award by the Lithuanian President to Youth Line director Paulius Skruibis who is also a BW Board member. Please see the attached description of this special occasion.

#### **Kaan Pete Roi 3rd Anniversary**

Our new member Kaan Pete Roi in Bangladesh celebrated their third anniversary on 28 April 2013. Since opening this Centre has taken more than 10,000 calls! In the attached note Yeshim Iqbal, founder and director of Kaan Peter Roi provides more information about this fantastic achievement.

I am sure you will join my sincere thanks and congratulations to all of our friends and colleagues in Australia and New Zealand, Lithuania and Bangladesh!

#### **New regional Co-ordinator**

We are pleased announce that Alan Ross, Executive of the Samaritans of New York, has offered to undertake the role of BW Regional Co-ordinator for North America.

### **Changes at BW Tokyo, Japan**

On 25th May Akiko Mura handed over her role as director of our Tokyo centre to Ms. Sachiko Baba. She is now their sixth Director who has been working for nine years as a listening volunteer. Also she was the person in charge of shifts and caring for all the volunteers in the centre.

### **New Twinning and Networking Co-ordinator**

We are also pleased to announce that Sue Trinder has been appointed as BW Twinning and Networking Co-ordinator. Sue has had a wide ranging international career and is now an executive coach and training consultant. She has been a Samaritans volunteer since 1981 and was also Co-founder of Befrienders International in Mauritius in 1995.

### **New Member**

We are delighted to announce that Ultimo Recurso in Uruguay has been appointed as a new member of BW.

### **Membership fees**

For your information the Board of BW has decided to postpone the issue of membership invoices until the end of 2016. You will therefore receive your next invoice in December 2016 and this will cover membership for the full year 2017.

### **Articles for BW News**

For the forthcoming editions of BW News we would like to provide the highlights of our member's recent major projects and special anniversaries. We will also provide further information about new members who have joined us since BW was formed as an independent organisation four years ago.

Please send the articles or information that you would like us to include to your Regional Co-ordinator and also to me personally at [chair@befrienders.org](mailto:chair@befrienders.org)

Please also do not hesitate to contact your Regional Co-ordinator or any member of the BW Board if you have any questions or comments.

With thanks and best wishes

Martin

Martin Taylor  
Chair

## Call sharing between Australia & New Zealand

One day in 2010 an Aussie Sam and a Kiwi Sam met when sharing a pint of beer while attending the Samaritans (UK /ROI) conference in York, England. They talked about how each of their Samaritan centres worked – this developed into their common dream of sharing the best practise (training, fund raising and the like) from both sides of the “ditch”- the Tasman Sea between Australia & New Zealand and ultimately providing a better service for our callers.

The three centres (Perth & Launceston in Australia & Wellington in New Zealand) were established within a few years of each other with their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries happening this decade. All three closely followed the training and protocols of Samaritans in UK/ROI with exchange of visits and “twinning” playing significant roles in their historic development.



About a year later representatives from these centres met in Sydney for the first of annual regional gatherings to share information about 24/7 cover; volunteer support; rostering software; volunteer recognition; intervention; caller confidentiality and caller care; volunteer anonymity; training materials and database alignment.

Key to these considerations was the rapidly changing communications environment simplifying infrastructure needs and hurdles in sharing calls across time zones - during summer there is a 5 hr time difference between Wellington & Perth and a 2 hr time difference between Wellington & Launceston.

Closer collaboration was agreed to, with the ultimate goal being the sharing of calls between Centres in Australia & New Zealand.

The 2013 gathering in Launceston (Tasmania) developed the topics from the Sydney meeting, deciding to establish call sharing initially between Perth & Launceston, then to be extended to include Wellington.

At the 2014 Regional meeting in Perth **Project Unite** – a telephone call answering partnership between these Samaritan Centres was formalised with the signing of A Memorandum of Understanding.

The October 2015 Regional meeting in Melbourne accepted the chosen VoIP technology and protocols as acceptable infrastructure to deliver on **Project Unite**. The success criteria we agreed on to reduce the incidence of suicide are:

- All shifts will be covered across Australia & New Zealand
- Call sharing operating 24/7 within all regions to provide better service coverage
- Volunteers involved, included and listened to
- Common shared database & roster
- Increased number of calls answered
- Improved caller satisfaction.

After several trials of the technology the joint call sharing went live in late December 2015.

A little information about the Centres:

In New Zealand there are six Samaritan Centres. Wellington is the largest with about 70 active volunteers and receives about 18,000 calls annually.

In Australia there are two Samaritan Centres. Perth, Western Australia, has about 80 active volunteers and receives about 22,000 calls annually; and Launceston, Tasmania, has about 40 active volunteers and receives about 3000 calls in a year. What have we learnt so far? We have very positive responses from both callers and volunteers. Callers are aware that they may be talking to volunteers based in a different country and feel that they talk about their issues differently. The volunteers are also now much busier than previously and have a wider range of callers to listen to – some who have different issues than they have heard previously. Many callers have very similar issues.

From a technology perspective all seems to be working well. The practices and procedures are being monitored and modified when necessary.

The future: we are now looking at getting the other New Zealand Centres to join the Project, while in Australia plans are being made to establish another Samaritan Centre in an east coast state.

[Kevin Crombie, Perth Samaritans, Australia & Regional Coordinator Australia/ New Zealand](#)

[Peter Barker, Wellington Samaritans, New Zealand](#)

## ***Youth Line Lithuania celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary***

Youth Line in Lithuania celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Founded by psychologist Dr. Kristina Ona Polukordienė Youth Line was a very unusual phenomenon in a country that had restored its' independence from Soviet Union less than a year earlier. What started as a small volunteer run service open just several hours a few days per week is now a well recognised national helpline operating 24/ 7 with more than 300 volunteers.

Lithuanian President Mrs Dalia Grybauskaitė recognised Youth Line significance in providing emotional support for young people by awarding Medal of the Order for Merits to Lithuania to Youth Line director Paulius Skruibis, who is also a Board Member of Befrienders Worldwide.



### ***Changes at BW Tokyo, Japan***



*Former Director*  
Yuhiro Tonai

*New Director*  
Sachiko Baba

*Predecessor Director*  
Akiko Mura

*International  
Liaison Officer*  
Yukiko Goto

### ***New Twinning and Networking Co-ordinator***



Sue Trinder

## Kaan Pete Roi, Bangladesh

It is Kaan Pete Roi's three-year anniversary, and I couldn't be more excited about how far we've come!

I'll share a few numbers. In honour of our **THREE** - year anniversary, as of April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Kaan Pete Roi is proudly open **SEVEN** days a week with **SEVEN** different phone lines. Since we first opened our lines on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013, we have taken more than **TEN THOUSAND** calls and we are receiving more and more calls every day. We now have **SIX** incredible staff members and have trained more than **ONE HUNDRED** volunteers working on outreach, awareness, capacity building all over the country, and of course, answering calls that come into our helpline.

I'm also proud to announce that since the first day we opened our lines three years ago, we have *never* had our phones closed when they shouldn't be. Through storms and blazing Dhaka sun, hartals and sieges, Eid, Puja, Purnima and Christmas, (even the occasional earthquake!) we have always been open when we said we would be.

Kaan Pete Roi now has collaborations with organizations all over Bangladesh and across the globe. We are a proud member – the one and only in Bangladesh - of Befrienders Worldwide, a global authority on suicide prevention.

As of early this year, we run an internship program with students from the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology at Dhaka University and are working with this department to create a comprehensive database of references to mental health services across the country. We have done events at institutions and organizations across the country. We've been to Tangail and Moulvibazar; we've been to Rangamati and Chittagong.

We have now held two hugely successful fundraising events and are looking forward to another one later this year. We have conducted community mental health interventions and trainings all over Bangladesh, and we're running multiple research projects so that we can both learn how to improve our services as well as better understand all of the issues we deal with in Bangladesh that might lead people to get on the phone with us.

At Kaan Pete Roi, we're extremely grateful to everyone who has made this work possible.

First and foremost, we are grateful to our generous donors and supporters, without whom our organization would not exist.

We are grateful to all the exceptional individuals who come forward to become volunteers. I am tremendously proud of the community that Kaan Pete Roi has become, rising to any occasion and striving to be bigger and better every day.

And we are especially grateful to those who trust us enough to call us and allow us into their lives; this trust is truly a gift.

I look forward to watching Kaan Pete Roi grow in the years to come. I hope you will join me. Please consider donating your time, skills, or resources – every little bit counts, and we would never have made it here without you.

And please spread the word – friends telling friends is the best way for us to let people know that we are here to help.

As always, thank you, thank you,  
**thank you!**

Yeshim Iqbal

Founder and Director

Kaan Pete Roi Emotional Support and  
Suicide Prevention Helpline