



An Introduction to



“CSAN is constantly impressed by the variety and quality of social care being delivered by the Catholic voluntary sector and seeks to support and develop these services in whatever way possible”

Philippa Gitlin, Director CSAN



CSAN (Caritas Social Action Network) is the umbrella organisation of charities with a Catholic ethos, providing professional social care within the UK. Our members provide services to marginalised and vulnerable children, adults and families of all faiths and none.

Our mission is to promote social justice within England and Wales. There are many professional Catholic charities providing social care from cradle to grave such as adoption services, care for vulnerable children and adults and community development within England and Wales. These organisations together represent the Catholic Voluntary Sector and it is for these organisations that CSAN exists.



We act as an umbrella body providing information, networking opportunities and facilitating collaborative working between our members, departments of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and Caritas Europa. Our main aim is to develop and improve the care services provided by member organisations in line with Catholic social teaching and good practice.

History

CSAN was established in 2003 by the Catholic Church in England and Wales through the merger of the Catholic Child Welfare Council, the Bishops' Conference Social Welfare Committee and the Catholic Agency for Social Concern.

CSAN is an official agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) and also part of the Caritas Internationalis Federation.

Who are our members?

CSAN's members are service providing organisations with an ethos based on Catholic social teaching. These include Catholic Diocesan care agencies and other regional and national charities as well as smaller local charities working within the UK. Our members are providers of a huge variety of professional care and support services to people with all faiths and none. The work they undertake supports the most marginalised and vulnerable people in our society today.

CSAN Members include:

- Cardinal Hume Centre • Depaul Trust • Families for Children Trust • Fr Hudson's Society • Housing Justice
- St John of God Hospitaller Services • St Vincent de Paul Society • A full list of members is available on our website •



What we do

Because CSAN members work in many different areas of social care, so do we. To enable us to support our members within all these different work areas, CSAN focuses on three key activities:

...Networking and Co-ordination

CSAN runs quarterly special interest forums, facilitating networking across the Catholic care charities within specific topic areas. These provide an environment within which members can be supported and informed as well as sharing best practice to have a positive impact on the lives of the most marginalised and vulnerable. We currently have four special interest forums you can become involved with: Schools Services / Older People Services / Children and Families Services / Vulnerable Adult Services. CSAN also runs time limited special project forums to undertake particular tasks to further the work of CSAN members. Special project forum topics include migration services mapping and older people's care services mapping.

CSAN is an independent agency that sits within the Catholic Church in England and Wales (CBCEW) Department for Christian Responsibility and Citizenship. CSAN ensures that there is close co-operation and collaboration between CSAN's member agencies and departments of CBCEW.

CSAN participates in the social policy activities of Caritas Europa. Staff from member organisations are nominated to attend meetings, in line with their particular skills, in order to disseminate relevant information to other members and CBCEW. This also helps ensure that any policy and procedural developments are in line with lessons learned in the UK. CSAN shares joint membership of Caritas Europa with CAFOD and this partnership ensures that both overseas and domestic issues are given attention at European level.

CSAN hosts a two day residential Annual Conference. The purpose of the Conference is to allow space and time for discussion and theological reflection on issues of social justice, and the outcome is to identify future action by the Church and its agencies.

“CSAN plays a vital role in connecting domestic social care delivered by the Catholic Community here, to those working within the same field in Europe through Caritas Europa. This collaboration supports the development of both social policy and service provision and is key to the effective evolution of Catholic social care in the UK.”

Rt Rev William Kenny, Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham and former President of Caritas Europa



“As a religious order, membership of CSAN enables us to connect to a much wider community of service providers who are active in similar areas to us. Their work, both research and resourcing, in the area of care of older people is of significant value.”

Brother John Martin OH, Provincial, Hospitaller Order of St John of God

...Theological Reflection on Catholic social teaching

CSAN believes Theological Reflection is necessary to embed service delivery in Gospel values and to inform any advocacy with a sound argument based on Catholic social teaching.

This is undertaken through conferences, study days and publications with the support of theologians and contacts with Catholic Higher Education Institutes. Partner institutions include: Heythrop College, Von Hugel Institute and Newman College



...AND Advocacy

Advocacy is undertaken when the issues affect member agencies because of their Catholicity, but not when there are other voluntary sector advocates who are better able to take up a generic issue. The circumstances under which CSAN undertakes advocacy include:

- Legislation proposed will affect member charities because of their Catholic ethos
- To correct, improve, explain member charities position to CBCEW or to Caritas Europa



CSAN continues to build relationships with MEP's as well as MP's in Westminster on behalf of its' members. This involves holding mini seminars for cross party Members of Parliament on topics determined by forthcoming legislation or policy. The purpose of this dialogue is to demonstrate the impact and value of the Catholic voluntary sector as well as enable MPs to better understand Catholic social teaching on any given issue.

“CSAN fulfils a vital role in providing the space for all of us who work with socially excluded people in this country and are concerned with social justice, to come together not only to share good practice but also to give much needed mutual support.”

Cathy Corcoran OBE, Chief Executive, Cardinal Hume Centre

Want to know more

If you are a provider of professional services to marginalised and vulnerable children, adults or families of all faiths and none and you are motivated by a Catholic ethos, we would like to encourage you to be members of CSAN.



Becoming a member CSAN offers you the following benefits:

- Regular opportunities for meeting with other charities with a Catholic ethos
- Attendance at CSAN forums such as Older People's Services, Schools Services
- Access to the Caritas Europa network
- Opportunities for networking with the departments of CBCEW and the Catholic Bishops
- Access to models of good practice in service delivery
- Shared advice on organisational strategy, HR, policy and fundraising
- Opportunities for joint training for staff and trustees
- Dedicated on-line extranet for sharing documents, discussions and advice
- Information from CSAN on issues relevant to Catholic social teaching or organisational development

There are two things you can do: 1. Read more about our current activities or 2. Fill in the membership form

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