

Befriending offers supportive trusting relationships through volunteer befrienders to people in the community who are socially isolated or facing difficulties in their lives.

Mission Statement

Befriending Network Scotland is a unique source of information, training, targeted consultancy and support regarding befriending. It exists to improve practice and to reduce risks at befriending projects, to increase communication between befriending projects and to heighten the public profile of befriending.

A Network of Befriending Projects

The majority of the 250 member projects of Befriending Network Scotland are based in Scotland and represent work with a wide range of user groups including children and young people, adults with mental

health problems, older people, people with disabilities and people facing homelessness. In 2008/09 we also provided support to projects from England, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Summary of the Year

2008/9 saw a continuation of our efforts to support befriending projects throughout the country and ensure that they are established and managed based on experience and best practice.

Services: A major focus of our work was on ensuring that befriending projects were supported in their work, learned from each other's experience and worked towards best practice standards. To achieve this we:

- delivered 31 training events, including the package 'Core Skills in Befriending' and complementary skills events
- facilitated 21 local networking meetings (Common Ground Meetings) throughout Scotland and in Newcastle
- organised a national conference on 'Friendship' exploring where research tells us the crossovers and differences with befriending are
- handled over 500 enquiries on practice issues in managing befriending projects or from enquirers seeking information on local befriending projects
- produced quarterly newsletters for befriending project staff (Net Gain) and for their volunteer befrienders (The Befriender)
- undertook consultancy, evaluation and feasibility studies for 9 organisations

Practical Developments: Behind the scenes, we strengthened the infrastructure to allow us to deliver

services more effectively and more professionally to a wide range of befriending projects:

- the website continued to develop new features such as an expanded online library, online booking and payment for all events, a discussion forum and e-newsletter
- we employed a part-time administrator with support from Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland

Developments: We were involved in initiatives to improve knowledge about befriending and ultimately the practice of befriending projects:

- we continued to deliver the Approved Provider Standard (a quality award scheme for befriending & mentoring projects)
- we submitted an application to the SQA for credit rating for the BNS Core Skills course
- we gained Scottish Government support to partner with Alzheimer Scotland on a training resource for befrienders working with people with dementia
- we worked on a revision to the Code of Practice for Befriending Projects
- we developed a link with WHR McCartney to try to secure better insurance for befriending projects

In Summary: With 3.4 full-time equivalent staff we achieved maximum effect with minimal resources, providing a range of services to befriending projects.

Our thanks go to those who provided financial support to Befriending Network Scotland during 2008/09

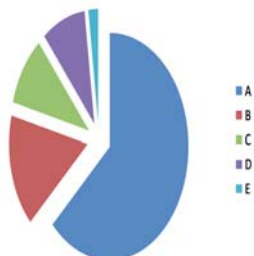
Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland | Big Lottery Fund in Scotland

Summarised Accounts Information

Income

A. Grants	63%
B. Consultancy	13%
C. Events	13%
D. Membership fees	9%
E. Publications/other	2%

TOTAL £143,973



Expenditure

A. Employee costs	65%
B. Consultancy provision	6%
C. Information costs	12%
D. Office costs	12%
E. Events	7%
F. Staff/committee/travel/training	2%

TOTAL £145,262



A full set of independently examined accounts is available from Befriending Network Scotland.

Accountants: Gibson McKerrrell Brown LLP, 14 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2BD

Impact

In 2008/9, Befriending Network Scotland's dedicated training, information, consultancy support and standards

assessment led to practice improvements in the management of befriending projects throughout the country.

Quotes from members

"Overall BNS training has provided an excellent foundation in terms of how to make the service the best it can be, as well as providing ideas of how to develop the project further."

"The project recently overhauled our Policies and Procedures, the Resource Library on the BNS website was invaluable for this, as was the online Discussion Forum"

"As the sole worker in the project I have found it very helpful to be able to access the BNS online forum or to be able to email people I have met through the Common Ground Meetings and Training Courses about issues that have arisen."

"The Approved Provider Standard has allowed us the opportunity to evaluate our practice and update appropriately. It has boosted the project's confidence with the recognition of good practice."

"The impact of BNS?"

- Successful pre-development phase of our project and now in the process of effective start-up phase of the project
- We've trained competent volunteers
- We've got proper project policies, procedures and guidelines
- We've had support/information on problem solving issues arising from our work."

Board of Directors 2008/9

Rosemary Cameron¹, Carers Befriending Project
Sheila Campbell¹, Befrienders (Argyll and Bute)
Andrew Findlay, Interest Link Borders
Angie Gourdie³, Integr8
Christi Guest, first hand
Jim Hamilton¹, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Melanie Lambert², Befriend ER
Jim Leary¹, SOLVE
Liz McLeish³, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Christine MacNally³, Clydesdale Befriending Group for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Neil Mathers, bfriends (CHILDREN 1st)
David Shipley³, Age Concern Newcastle
Elaine Smith, Volunteer Centre East Dunbartonshire Befriending Project
Mhairi Weir¹, Midlothian Befriending Scheme

¹ Retired Oct/Nov 08 ² Retired Jul 08 ³ Joined Oct/Nov 08

Staff List 2008/9

Mike Nicholson, Development Manager
Susan Gilchrist, Training Officer
Martha Lester-Cribb, Quality Officer
Sam Rospigliosi, Information Officer
Alison Chapman, Administrator