

As Bridges enters its eighth year, it's time to reflect on what we have achieved and what the future might hold.

Bridges is certain that our services will continue to be needed because we know that people will still have the need to seek shelter and sanctuary, and we are certain that asylum seekers, refugees and migrants will still need their skills and qualifications recognised, supported and adapted for living in the UK. We continually think about how we can maintain our levels of service; continue to adapt to clients' changing needs; influence mainstream services and delivery and survive the economic downturn.

The Trustees and staff are not short of ideas as this report demonstrates. So we face the future with some optimism and our usual boundless energy. We operate in a rapidly changing environment, but if our clients have taught us anything, it's to be flexible, not to give up and always to have hope.

Equipping, developing, empowering and providing opportunities for our clients are the pillars of our vision. Behind those ideals are our team of Trustees and our dedicated staff: Maggie, Suki, Liz, Jonathan, Regine, Elio, Tiff, Patricia, Fiona and Campbell. Between us, the staff speak 14 languages. Three are trained English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) practitioners, and we have a combined 28 years experience in this sector.

We are well placed to take Bridges into the next few years meeting whatever challenges we face.

Building Bridges – Building Futures

To give someone the skills that are needed for a particular purpose

**Equipped for the Future (EFF)**, is the title of our successful employability programme, now in its third year.

Changes in client demographics, and government policy, means that now over 70% of our clients have leave to remain and work, and so our support has changed to reflect this.

Our four week long EFF courses involve employers throughout the programme and beyond, offering one to one advice, mock interviews, CV help and placements. Over 30% of clients who complete the courses obtain sustainable employment within 6 months and the feedback from employers and clients makes it clear that our approach is innovative and that it works. Despite the current economic downturn, our clients continue to prepare for entry into the labour market. At Bridges we are encouraging clients to use this time to prepare and consolidate their skills.

Being pro-active we have developed a new programme, **Get Ready for a Career in Social Care** which is aimed at clients who have experience in this sector or who have decided on a career change. The course offers placements and job opportunities with public and private sector Social Care providers, and a crucially important 90 hour ESOL For Social Care course, developed with the Metropolitan College. Of the 35 who have completed courses and who have leave to work, 7 are completing their placements, 12 are now employed and 3 have gone onto further study in the sector.



Vision

What something could be like in the future

Summary

The main facts

In the last 12 months Bridges has developed and increased the number and type of support packages we deliver. Over 180 clients have been assisted in some way or other.

In addition to our **placement programme**, our **Women's Empowerment** support and our **Equipped for the Future** employability support; we doubled the number of **Life Skills** places available to young people. We developed a new range of ESOL for the work place courses in conjunction with the Metropolitan College and introduced new **Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN)** support for clients while supporting some clients with a teaching background to become support tutors in this area.

As the numbers of legacy case clients continued to grow and people received leave to remain, and as new arrivals from Iraq, who had worked with the British Government and Ministry of Defence, began to arrive; we saw demand for our services outstrip supply at times and we continue to have a waiting list of clients. It's a frustrating situation for potential clients and for staff when we know our various projects have such a high success rate.

Women clients continue to be in the majority and clients from Central and Southern Africa remain the largest group with Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan the next biggest. For the first time we saw clients from Nepal, Burma and from the new European states who have access to our non refugee funded programmes, and after many years we began to engage with the Chinese community in Glasgow.

Bridges works with lots of partners, not least our 50 plus employers from across the private, public and third sectors.

Employers engage with us in a wide variety of ways including developing specific elements of our programme. This year we have worked with **Glasgow City Council** and **BUPA** to create our **Get Ready for a Career in Social Care** programme.

Having worked with the **Red Cross** in Scotland for years, they were happy to host our second **Life Skills course** for young clients in January 2009. We have gone on to consolidate that relationship with a Red Cross residential facility in Ayrshire now hosting placements.

Further Education Colleges in Glasgow have been at the forefront of support for asylum seekers and refugees. Our **Life Skills programme** has formed part of the 16 plus ESOL curriculum at **Annesland College** for two years, and we have developed our range of vocational ESOL classes with the **Metropolitan College**. Education is a key element for many of our clients and we are in our third year of our **Open University** programme. Bridges hosts a secondee from the OU as our Higher Education Advisor and in the last 12 months 16 clients have accessed a variety of their courses.

Our ALN programme for tutors and clients is in partnership with **Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector** and the **Glasgow Women's Library**.

**Careers Scotland** is one of our partners, along with Annesland College and the Red Cross in a European Social Fund Project.

The biggest opportunity we provide is the chance, through work experience or work shadowing, for a client to experience, first hand, what their job or employment sector is like in the UK. For people who have been out of the labour market for some time, and whose experience from overseas is perhaps not directly compatible, it's an invaluable tool to assist people to make informed decisions about their future. Sometimes, because of many barriers, a client has to face that working in a familiar sector is just not feasible or will take longer than they thought to re-train or up-skill. That's where Bridges' experience counts and we can advise clients to use their skills and experiences in different ways, but which will still provide them with a future.

Our employer partners are key to this process. By providing informal and realistic careers advice, helping people learn more about the opportunities in their sector, presenting their past skills and experience in the best way, they can help clients see that opportunities still remain, even if it's not their first choice. Bridges' clients are flexible and resilient – they've had to be. We encourage those qualities when we are looking at people's futures, afterall, it's what employers are looking for in a workforce.

Our work based programmes give people an opportunity to show what they can do, demonstrate their potential, and for those still waiting on a decision about staying in the UK, provide meaningful and useful activity while they are waiting.

The possibility of doing something

Part of Bridges' success in the last seven years has been our ability to change and develop to meet the changing circumstances and needs of our clients. In the last 12 months our clients have changed too. The Scottish Government saw the potential of our programme to assist others for whom English was a second language as well as asylum seekers and refugees, and their funding has allowed us to extend our client base accordingly.

2008-2009 saw the introduction of new services, and in the next 12 months we will develop programmes for the construction and customer care sectors and start a new programme in partnership with Celtic and Rangers FCs.

As part of our future sustainability we hope to develop as a social enterprise implementing the Bridges' model elsewhere in Scotland or wider afield. This new approach will be supported, if funding permits, by a network of support, on line materials and electronic newsletters.

Bridges continues to influence the European employment agenda for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, working transnationally to promote anti-discriminatory practices in the workplace with partners in Germany, Spain, Flanders, Greece, Estonia and England.

We have hosted delegates from Sweden and Norway interested in our approach and have been asked for advice from projects in Northern Ireland and Slovenia.

Bridges sits on the advisory group of a government initiative looking at the support mechanisms to recognise migrant and refugee learning, skills and qualifications.

Despite the challenges Bridges never sits still for long!

Opportunity



To give someone the power and skills to achieve something

Empower

Many of our women clients are single parents, sometimes with poor English, little formal education or work experience, some still waiting on an asylum appeal decision. Their prospects of settling and making a future for their families are few.

Twice a year we run the **Women's Empowerment Programmes** to support women with personal action plans to identify their next steps, whether ESOL classes, college courses, finding a mentor, volunteering or moving into employment. The themes explored over 6 weeks are: identity, confidence, assertiveness, time for themselves and planning for the future.

For many of our young people, often here without parents or family members, things can seem desolate. Unsure about the next steps, with an uncertain future and struggling to get qualifications, it takes special support to ensure they don't fall through the cracks.

Bridges offers a mentoring service, advice and guidance and a **Life Skills Course**, 13 weeks of support around self awareness, opportunity awareness, skills awareness and education and employment support. In the last 12 months two courses were delivered one with Annesland College and one with the Red Cross. The courses incorporate a residential element.

Recognising that clients in both groups had issues with numeracy and literacy we introduced in 2009 an ALN programme with individual tutorial support, tutors drawn from Bridges clients with a teaching or educational background. Three of the support tutors are now undertaking the next level of professional qualification to allow them to work in this sector.

ICS PROGRAMMES LIMITED (FORMERLY THE BRIDGES PROGRAMMES LIMITED)  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2008

	Unrestricted Funds 2008	Restricted Funds 2008	Total Funds 2008	Total Funds 2007
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES (£)</b>				
Incoming Resources from generated funds				
Investment Income	1,272	-	1,272	770
Incoming Resources from charitable activities				
Grants	46,145	195,066	241,211	215,463
Other	2,651	-	2,651	1,800
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>50,068</b>	<b>195,066</b>	<b>245,134</b>	<b>218,033</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Charitable Activities	27,642	199,867	227,509	205,176
Governance Costs	-	7,387	7,387	5,265
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>27,642</b>	<b>207,254</b>	<b>234,896</b>	<b>210,441</b>
<b>OUTGOING /INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Fund balances at 1 January 08	31,234	31,361	62,595	55,003
Fund balances at 31 December 08	53,660	19,173	72,833	62,595

<b>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2008</b>				
	£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible assets		3,567		2,434
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Cash and bank balances	72,183		35,643	
Debtors and prepayments	32,640		44,417	
	104,823		80,060	
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>				
Creditors: Amounts falling due within 1 year	(35,555)		(19,899)	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>69,268</b>		<b>60,161</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<b>72,835</b>		<b>62,595</b>
<b>CAPITAL AND FUNDS</b>				
Called up share capital	2		2	
Unrestricted funds	53,660		31,232	
Restricted funds	19,173		31,361	
		72,835		62,595

This is a summary of the full audited accounts which are available on request.

The financial statements were approved by the Board and signed on its behalf on 3 April 2009 by:- **James Gaffney** and **Margaret Lennon** (Trustees)





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 2008 -2009**

# Building Bridges Building Futures

