

## **DESTITUTION PROJECT**

Our destitution project is still providing food, cash, toiletries, feminine hygiene and maternity assistance to around 60 destitute refused asylum seekers who come to us each week for help. In addition, the Red Cross provide £3.90 per person per week to cover the cost of bus fares. The project also provides nappies, baby milk, baby food and other essential items for the growing number of growing babies we support. In addition, we give an extra £5 per week to pregnant women right up to the birth of their babies, when we donate a maternity pack.

## **BUT THAT IS NOT ALL WE DO!**

Our weekly drop-in sessions continue to be very lively, where new asylum seekers, refused asylum seekers, and refugees come for the opportunity to chat to our volunteers, meet old and new friends, and take advantage of our social activities. At the drop-ins, we usually hold a cooking class, which is very popular, mainly because everyone gets a chance to sample the results at the end of the afternoon! Over 120 people come to our weekly drop-ins, which, with the 60 or so accessing the destitution project, makes Wednesdays a rather busy day for all of us.

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Once again, I wish to thank our funders, including Bolton at Homes, through the Asylum Team, who provide our core funding. We also received funding for 2010 and from Scott Trust.

I look forward to 2011 with eager anticipation. We have already given ourselves a massive task for the year, and I am confident that by all working together we will continue to enjoy the success that BRASS has achieved over the past 10 years. For further information on the activities of BRASS, please visit our website at [www.brass-bolton.org.uk](http://www.brass-bolton.org.uk)

Thank you all for your support.

C. Ian Bury, Co.Chair  
16<sup>th</sup> March 2011

We must mention Warburtons and Faireshare.  
Finally I would like to thank Ray Collett with his continued support.

## **WHAT DO WE OFFER?**

### **FRIENDSHIP**

Many people are happy to offer friendship to those living in Bolton who are seeking asylum. Some offer support at our drop-in on Wednesday afternoons, while others extend this to include accompanying people to appointments (doctors, hospital or advisory), and some volunteers even welcome people into their homes to join in family activities.

### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**BRASS** offers opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees to improve their skills.

### **SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH**

**BRASS** provides practical help with conversational English, either on a one to one basis or in a group activity. There are also special creative classes which also improve spoken and written English skills.

### **OFFICIAL LETTERS**

Volunteers and staff provide help and support in understanding and producing official letters written in English.

### **COMPUTING AND I.T. SKILLS**

- Training in basic computer skills.
- Various IT courses to suit all levels of ability.
- Free internet access.

### **SEWING CLASS**

Sewing classes give people the opportunity to learn how to use both hand and electric sewing machines in making garments, household textiles, etc.

### **TABLE TENNIS**

We also have a table tennis team playing in a local league.

It would be fair to say that both roles have changed significantly over the year but both have risen to the challenge.

Like most charities, we could not be successful without the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. BRASS has an excellent team of volunteers and I wish to publicly express my admiration and gratitude to them for their commitment.

Equally, we have a team of tutors, both voluntary and professional, led by Sandra Brooks. They provide an excellent service tutoring, training and leading the classes run by BRASS, and I extend my thanks to them for their tremendous work for currently reviewing the initial assessment process and the teaching and learning strategies to ensure maximum learner engagement and to respond positively to the skills agenda.

We recently undertook a rationalization approach as to how we would be fit for purpose. We could not meet our expectation without the brilliant partnership BRASS has with Bolton University and in particular Rose Galloway who provide us with all our Trainee Teachers who I would like to wish success in their chosen career.

I would also like to thank all our other partners i.e.: Bolton at Home, The Asylum Team, Scott Trust, The Green House Project, Warburton, etc ...

I would also like to thank Anthony Shakeshaft who looks after our service users' medical wellbeing.

BRASS staff has now designed a matrix so that all our clients are logged on and each time they come and their requirements are recorded.

It has been a difficult year in terms of funding as the cuts also affected us. We lost I.O.M funding in October and the ABG grant also ceased.

We are constantly amazed at the generosity of the people of Bolton and around who donate gifts, money or bags of food on a weekly basis. We have a constant need for second hand clothes for our clients.

# BRASS

Registered Charity No. 1109703

## Annual Review 2010

Firstly, I would like to thank all members of the BRASS Management Committee for their support over the year. 2010 has been a particular difficult year in view of one of the most serious down turns in the economy ever. In addition, we had a change of Government and against a back drop of many agencies either closing or at least curtailing their activities. The number of clients has significantly risen due to other avenues now being closed to them.

Secondly, I would like to thank Sylvie N'Guessan, our Co-ordinator, who not only runs the charity but she also combines this with that of Destitution Project Coordinator role previously held by Barbara Collett who I would like to publicly thank for her sterling work.

Sylvie has once again done a tremendous job this year in running the charity and ensuring that all of our core functions are performing to a high standard. As part of both roles, she has overseen an increase in the number and quality of our English classes, which we call "ESOL in a Social Context". The number of classes we run has now increased to nine per week, and many refugees attend all of them, because they are aware, as are we, that without a good level of English, their chances of accessing employment (and volunteering) opportunities are considerably reduced.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Malcolm Ngouala, our Support Worker, for continuing to manage and monitor our various projects. Malcolm has carried out a very difficult task with energy and enthusiasm, and I am pleased to say that Malcolm has responded very capably to the increased pressures of this role.