

# Restore

a project of Birmingham Churches Together  
supporting refugees and  
people seeking sanctuary from persecution

## Annual Report 2010



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## **Restore 2010**

### **Report of the Chair of the Management Committee**

2010 saw Howard Saunders step down as Chair of the Management Committee. Restore has been extremely grateful for his contributions. He saw Restore through a period of development and consolidation over the past few years.

Shari Brown has continued to manage the project as it goes through considerable changes both of staff and the nature of its casework. There has been an increase in the number of people being given 'Leave to Remain' due to government policy resolving legacy cases. This has had an impact on the work of Restore, as people pass through that transitional period and start to look for employment. Sadly, an increase in people experiencing destitution has also had an impact on staff's workload.

Geraldine Hunt was appointed as part time Administrative Assistant and has settled well into the job and team. Jess Poyner has shown commitment, energy and skill in her post as Befriending Support Worker. There have been changes in the members of the Management Committee, too. Gillian Bryan has retired from her role as Treasurer and we are grateful for her work, welcoming Natalie Chong as she gets into the job. We have also lost Rebecca Gash, who did a sterling job as Secretary, but wish her well as she begins married life. Again Restore has been fortunate in new members with their wealth of experience and enthusiasm.

Financially this year has been one of concern, as some of the larger funding streams came to an end and new ones still remain to be found. As predicted, income from charitable trusts has fallen, and government cutbacks have generally placed greater demands on the charitable sector. Donations from churches, individuals and others have continued to generously support Restore.

Befriending those seeking sanctuary remains a core value of Restore. It continually challenges all of us to live generously and compassionately. Bishop James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool, said: "The gospel is about grounding heaven." Restore is one project which endeavours to put this into practice and in so doing is truly transformational in those befriended and those befriending.

Revd Susan Height, May 2011



## **Restore 2010 Report of the Project Coordinator**

2010 was the year in which we rejoiced in hearing a number of long-standing clients say: "I've got Indefinite Leave to Remain!" The Case Resolution Directorate was set up to deal with thousands of outstanding 'legacy' cases and committed to resolve the majority of these cases by the summer of 2011. Much staff time was spent helping people who had received ILR move from asylum to mainstream support as they negotiated the challenges of accessing benefits, finding accommodation and seeking employment. My colleagues have become experts in Jobcentre Plus procedures and we are grateful to the Birmingham Law Centre who threatened judicial review when benefits were taking months to come through, leaving people temporarily destitute.

Whilst we have celebrated the good news of those granted Leave to Remain, we are conscious that many asylum seekers remain indefinitely destitute if they have been refused asylum and had support terminated. Restore continues to work closely with the Hope Projects, which last year became an independent charity. As a Hope Projects director with others, I am heartened by the development of Hope Housing currently accommodating about 30 people in 8 houses and supporting hundreds of people over time through the Hope Destitution Fund.

Restore's advocacy work has grown as supporters have participated in our Voucher Exchange Scheme, seeking to give greater dignity to those on cashless support, and responded to the call to express concern about the Council's decision to withdraw accommodation from asylum seekers. We were sorry to hear the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor John Lines, announce the decision last October to terminate its contract with the UK Border Agency. As of June 2011 asylum seekers will only be accommodated by the private sector in the West Midlands. Despite this development, we hope that the Council has heard our wish for the city to aspire to be a welcoming place for all new-comers.

I am incredibly spoilt by the quality of work of my colleagues and particularly thank Jeremy Thompson for his contribution as Befriending Coordinator. Sarah Dixon, our Befriending Support Worker, went on maternity leave in May 2010 and though missed, is fulfilling an important role in caring for her twin boys. Jess Poyner joined us in June to cover her maternity leave and Geraldine Hunt has an administrative role, following on from Alison Thorne before her.

Involvement in regional and national refugee work continues as I represent Restore and/or the voluntary sector's Refugee Strategy Network in meetings of the regional UKBA, the Churches Refugee Network and NACCOM (No Accommodation network). Partnerships are also valued with local support groups: Solihull Welcome, World Friends in Selly Oak, Narthex in Sparkhill, Welcome in Handsworth Wood, Halesowen Welcome and, most recently, the newly established St Chad's Sanctuary.

Thanks also need to be extended to our donors, who help sustain the work of Restore. We are grateful for individual and church donations, standing orders of 'Friends' of Restore, and to the charitable trusts, which supported us through 2010 - including the Tudor Trust, Allan and Nesta Ferguson Trust, Friends Hall Farm Street Trust, Church Urban Fund, Allen Lane Foundation, Faiths in Action, William A Cadbury Trust and WF Southall Trust.

## **Befriending in 2010:**

**112 referrals of new clients**  
**35 new befriending matches**  
**80 on-going matches at the end of December**

One-to-one befriending was the first aspect of work that Restore developed following its formation in 1999, and befriending remains the focus for our team of 70 compassionate volunteers. They meet their befriendees to provide regular support. In 2010 we identified 3 words that more clearly defined the aims of Restore's befriending work:

**Welcome**

**Involve**

**Belong**

We aim to welcome the stranger, involve them in activities (with Restore, other agencies, English language classes, toddler groups, etc.) so that ultimately they have a sense of belonging to a new society where they can rebuild their lives and develop supportive relationships.

Is befriending still necessary? Unfortunately – yes! One asylum seeker described Restore's role and impact as follows: **“What is Restore to me? In simple terms, it is my heaven on earth. Why? Charitable organisations like Restore have done a great job in reaffirming to us that somebody somewhere still loves us. This act has always motivated us back to life.”** Another asylum seeker wrote about the specific benefits of being befriended: **“Restore got me a befriender and we coincidentally share the same hobbies and interests. She has been like family to me and has offered a shoulder to lean on. My life has changed drastically and it has made me realise that without organisations like Restore, life would be doomed to many in my situation. I can never thank them enough.”** Some clients have been in the UK for a long time, yet still need help to become better integrated; others are newer to the UK. An asylum seeker who arrived in the UK in 2010 and now has refugee status wrote: **“Since I started attending Restore I have found my befriender very supportive, informative, caring and considerate. Restore has enabled me to confidently integrate myself into the community. I found Restore like a shelter for people like me who are lost in this world.”**

A member of Restore's Management Committee wrote: **“Many have arrived in the UK after experiencing war, persecution, trauma and even torture at the hands of the governments in their own countries, many for just 'demonstrating' for a cause, which is accepted as a 'right' in this country. On arrival here they are faced with not being able to speak the language, not knowing anyone, being separated from family, with a very uncertain future. Therefore they feel emotionally bereft and isolated: living life 'on the edge', vulnerable and not really part of society. At this point, the work of Restore comes into its own. By placing a befriender alongside this hurting person, Restore opens another world to those seeking asylum. It is offering kindness, emotional help, compassion, listening, treating them as a worthwhile person to be valued and as a person to be worth spending time with.”**

Over a number of years Restore has averaged 100 new referrals per annum, so with 112 referrals in 2010 there was no slowdown in the need for help from Restore. During 2010 we had several referrals from new referrers – notably from a Community Psychiatric Nurse at the Asylum Seeker Health Team and from new staff members at the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture. The number of matches was lower than hoped for, but a key reason was changes to the Criminal Records Bureau system and the long waits that new applicants experienced with the new

CRB process. This was a frustrating phase when there were volunteers keen to start and clients who would have benefitted from extra emotional support.

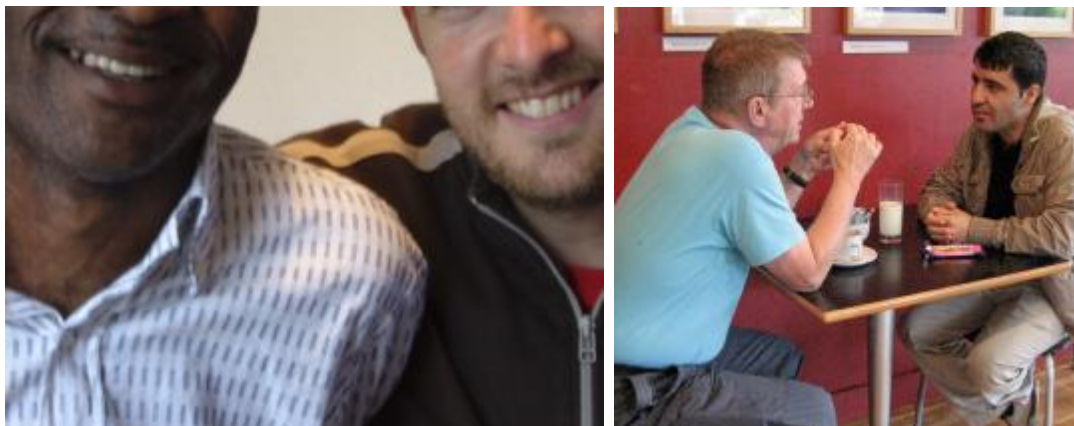
Every befriending relationship is different. This was the experience of one befriender: **“I offer support and encouragement to my befriender, have given informal ESOL tuition, help the older children with homework and celebrate birthdays and other events with the family. While the practical help has been really appreciated, I think it is fair to say that the development of a relationship that is consistent, unconditional, personal and caring has been the most powerful and transformative experience both for my befriender and for me.”**

Another befriender alluded to the challenges of befriending across cultures: **“I can honestly say that my befriender has gained at least 25 cups of coffee from our befriending relationship this year. Beyond that, you’ll have to ask him what he has gained. But I have gained a great deal thanks to Restore’s helpful training and all the experience shared and support offered to me as a new befriender. It has been daunting at times: how do you build a relationship and create trust with someone whose life experience is so dramatically different from yours, and who doesn’t yet speak much English?”**

Befriending can be a very challenging experience, particularly where a client has struggled with many issues and then received a negative decision on their asylum claim, highlighted through the eyes of this befriender: **“In the ten months I have known my befriender, she had to manage visits to the UK Border Agency, her GP, her solicitor, two admissions to hospital and post-traumatic stress disorder. She had to move from one large city to another, then change house twice in Birmingham. She had to manage the contents of a rucksack full of accumulated papers and know just where each relevant one was. She faced rejection and despondency when asylum applications failed. However, she says that the good things that have happened to her are the outreach of Restore, its befriending service and the care within its women’s group, the support from Hope Housing and the Hope Destitution Fund, going to college to learn English, and thus a lessening of the sense of isolation she feels.”**

2010 became a positive year for some befriendeds and their befrienders. These experiences are described by several volunteers. We rejoice with them and are delighted to include so many quotes on a similar theme:

**“2010 was a memorable year. The couple whom I have befriended for nearly six years gained status. It was a great joy for all of us. Problems followed with housing but that was eventually resolved when they were allocated a very pleasant flat, which they have turned into a lovely home.”**



**“I didn't see my befriender all that often in 2010, but that was for the best of reasons: he was granted his Indefinite Leave to Remain in February! You can imagine his excited phone call to tell me the news... Since then, he has been trying to save up money from a variety of types of work. This month he will be eligible to apply for a UK passport, after which his ambition is to see his family members again, in a neutral country. It has been good to have supported and encouraged him during the last three years, on a long and winding journey.”**

**“I have befriended for some two years now and it has been a very enriching experience for me; I have been so impressed by his resilience, persistence and cheerfulness in the face of so many setbacks from all areas of bureaucracy, whether it be immigration, getting a job, or getting a driving license. Now, slowly, slowly, things are becoming better for him – he has Leave to Remain, his wife has been able to join him, he has a nice flat that he has transformed himself and he has the occasional job. They seem very grateful for the support I have given them but I wish I could do more.”**

Many of these comments reflect significant changes in life experiences but also changes in the befriending relationship itself: **“It started with inexpensive meals in a Birmingham pub. My befriender lived in limbo for years, virtually destitute and unemployable. Would he be returned to the civil war he had fled, or have the freedoms and opportunities for which he had risked? Recently I had a very different meal with my befriender. He and his newly married wife entertained me in their home: a sumptuous meal and a celebration of Leave to Remain. Befrienders are privileged to have diverse roles. In those pub meals it was the role of listening, encouraging, and very occasionally advising. In that celebratory home meal, I lost a befriender and gained a life-time friend.”**

Those who are befriended sometimes express similar sentiments, like this man who is still seeking sanctuary: **“I think he (i.e. my befriender) will be a friend for the rest of my life.”**

Whilst we do not anticipate that all befriending relationships will be enduring after people have gained permission to stay, this befriender has maintained contact with her befriender and sees the signs of lasting integration: **“Having been in touch with my friend and her son since 2004, I am lucky enough to be in touch with them in a positive phase of their lives. While issues such as housing may still cause the occasional problem, mainly we just spend time chatting about everyday things, such as how my friend's son is getting on at school. Last time I saw them he was delighted to have been trusted to bring a cello home from school. He has lessons each Thursday, and has to take the instrument in, but otherwise it is effectively his. It is wonderful to watch the concentration and care with which he carefully takes the cello from its case, and plays a few tuneful notes, his face rapt.”**

The Restore staff team and Management Committee pay tribute to all our befrienders and the amazing, steadfast service they offer through the upheavals and sometimes joys of their befriender's life. Whether you have befriended for years or a few weeks, your gift of welcome, your efforts to include and your aim to help your befriender belong to this society are hugely appreciated.

**Thank you for all that you offer, for all that you do and  
for all that you are to our refugee friends.**

## **Restore 2010 Social Activities for Men**

**33 men's activities - 63 men attended at least one event**  
(31 of those men attended for the first time in 2010)

Key aims of the Men's Activities are to reduce isolation and increase integration through providing both recreational and educational experiences in a friendly group setting. How are the words 'welcome', 'involve' and 'belong' reflected in the Men's Activities? It is hard to measure such 'soft' targets, but comments from attendees attest to Restore's success in this field with 'hard to reach' men:

**"I have been fortunate enough to be part of Restore's men activities over the last 5 years. I found this so helpful to join in with men in the same situation as myself, to be able to talk together which raises my spirits during some difficult times. I have found these experiences to be a very positive, uplifting time and have enabled me to make some friends."**

**"Involvement in activities can take away loneliness and boredom by re-engaging in activities of interest in a more constructive and creative manner."**

There was a significant change in membership during 2010 as some regular attendees gained ILR in the first part of the year and then either moved away from Birmingham or became heavily involved in seeking employment. During the year several new clients became regular attendees. So by the end of the year, we had a group of regular attendees who were mainly new to Restore. There has therefore been a period of change and rebuilding of the sense of group. It has been good to see clients supporting each other: those who are longer-term in Birmingham with newer ones and also those who have better English translating for others. One of our newer clients made the following comment: **"As everyone knows we are living in loneliness but with Restore I have felt myself as part of the society where I can speak, be listened to and interact with other people."**

During the year there have been many activities – museums, music, cinema, walks in the countryside and, occasionally, swimming. Hopefully, something for everyone. We experimented with new venues and events including: discovering an oasis of tranquillity on a warm summer's day at the Winterbourne Botanical Gardens; seeing Sarehole Mill with its waterwheel and machinery in action; touring Hadden Hill Hall and Park at the suggestion of a client who had been there himself; and building on our previous visits to the Birmingham Conservatoire by attending their Christmas Carol Concert. On the issue of appreciating the classical music concerts, one man mentioned an Urdu idiom, which when translated means 'music is the food for the soul'. One of the highlights was being given free tickets to Warwick Castle (thus saving us nearly £240!) after which one client who had been in the country for 5 months pronounced: **"This is the best day since I came to Birmingham!"** And it truly was a feast of history and pageantry. Many appreciated outdoor trips in the summer to places like the Lickey Hills as this was a complete change of scene and provided a quiet environment, fresh air and a huge contrast to inner city Birmingham.

Whilst a number of the venues are free, for people on very limited incomes or with little knowledge of what is on offer, Restore's assistance is vital: **"I have been to the leisure centre to swim with Restore, we went to the Conservatoire for a concert, we went to The Public (an art gallery) in West Brom where we had lots of fun. It is important for me to highlight that for each of these activities;**

**Restore has paid the travel for me and provided some refreshments too” and “I would not be able to see those places if it were not for Restore.”**

Nothing should be set in stone. We may need to look at activities at other times for those actively seeking employment between 9am and 5pm, who would also benefit from interaction. However, for those waiting for decisions or destitute with much more time on their hands, daytime activities are a vital link with wider society.



Winterbourne Botanical Gardens



Lickey Hills

It has been good to build on volunteer involvement in the Men’s Activities as this increases the opportunities for interaction, English conversation, mutual understanding and integration. A volunteer shares from his own experiences: **“I have found a new niche with Restore in joining in men’s events. New friendships have resulted - we have a lot of laughs, but also there is a serious side. I hope my presence enables people to take heart from knowing that there are those out there who care and take an interest. Also I hope that this enables some to improve their language skills.”** Another volunteer wrote about a trip to Coventry in the Easter holidays: **“For me the visit to Coventry was a real joy. We shared a picnic outside before entering the Transport Museum. Sitting in the back of one of the fastest cars in the world was a highlight especially as there was a virtual demonstration of a land-speed record! These occasions are relaxed and it was so pleasing that the men had the space and time to open up, if they wanted to. We then proceeded to the top of Coventry Cathedral, which had been bombed in the Second World War. Whilst at present we live in a peaceful period in the UK, this opportunity allowed us to share their sorrows, when countries have been torn apart by the ugliness of war and innocent lives have been lost. It certainly made me reflect and consider how others are still suffering here in the UK, seeking sanctuary, when their own lands are no longer a safe place to stay.”**

## **Restore 2010 Social Activities for Lone Women:**

**21 women's activities - 45 women attended at least one event**  
(29 of those women attended for the first time in 2010)

In the 2009 Annual Report we started this section with the heading 'from pilot scheme to core activity'. Activities for lone women started as a once a month experiment in early 2009 to explore the response to such a new venture. We quickly realised that the activities met a felt need of lone women to meet together and break down social isolation. 2010 saw further development and consolidation of this core activity.

In 2010 21 Women's Activities were organised with a total of 45 women attending at least one activity. There was a variety of activities, ranging from local historical visits to Aston Hall, Soho House and The Staffordshire Hoard exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery, to cultural activities like the 'Rush Hour Blues' jazz concert and a traditional 'Carols by Candlelight' concert, both at the Symphony Hall, and a visit to the The Public Art Gallery in West Bromwich where women enjoyed creating their own interactive art. The women have also thoroughly enjoyed wonderful cooked dinners followed by craft activities at the home of Restore supporters.

A new referral to Restore described the impact of the Women's Activities: **"I enjoy being together with other women and the opportunity I have to talk and just to have fun...it makes me happy. When I am alone in my room I feel very low. I need to be with people."**

Other women expressed how the activities had in some way helped them to overcome the challenges they faced: **"I came to the UK distorted, tortured and with no hope of recovery whatsoever. I was so stressed and I did not want to talk to anyone or open-up. When I was asked to meet with Restore I wondered why and asked myself if they really would help me but I thank God they came to my life. Whenever I have faced challenges I have found the help and advice that I need. My life is changed because of the women's activities around Birmingham and I have learned a lot about the history of Birmingham and the UK. I interact more with others and am now more energetic. I always look forward to the next event. Thank you so much Restore for being in my life."** Another woman said: **"I went to Restore right after suffering from mental health problems, so at the time I was very stressed and paranoid. However, by attending women's activities organised by Restore, I started gaining my trust and confidence back. Getting involved with the women made me realise that I was not alone and there was more to life than getting stressed out."**

Swimming remains one of the most popular activities, largely owing to its therapeutic quality. Even though most women are beginners they really enjoy being in the pool and having a go. As one woman said: **"I like the feel of the water. I feel so good when I'm in the pool. We should do more swimming soon as my doctor says it is good for my body!"** Another commented: **"It was a very relaxed, stress relief and nice experience. I really, really enjoyed my time with the women's group."**

It has been pleasing to see an increase in group cohesion among the regular attendees and newcomers. Through time shared together at these activities, the contacts and friendships made have provided many women with a network of support

during the week. Early in the year one of the new women, a young Zimbabwean, became destitute soon after she attended an event. The older women in the group were quick to watch out for her and give her encouragement and support during the week.



Aston Hall

The Women’s Activities also provided opportunities for women to share experience and advice, particularly among those who have recently received ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain) or refugee status. Discussions often revolved around benefit applications and the process of searching for jobs and bidding for housing. For these women to share knowledge and to know that they were not the only ones going through so many changes was vital for them. Such discussions also gave Restore staff the opportunity to offer guidance and signposting to relevant services.



Blakesley Hall

## Summer Holiday Programme for families in 2010

### 8 summer holiday trips attended by 160 people from 19 countries

Restore's summer holiday programme ran from 27 July to 19 August 2010 and included 8 activity days - 2 swimming days at the Handsworth Leisure Centre, our annual Columban House fun day, visiting the Cotswold Country Park and Beach, Ash End Children's Farm, Adventure Play Centre in Wolverhampton, Severn Valley Railway and Beaudesert Park (camp site). There was good attendance at most events and no accidents. Even the weather was kind!

160 people participated, including 103 children aged from 8 months to 17 years. The following 19 countries were represented: Afghanistan, Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Georgia, Ivory Coast, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Kosovo, Mongolia, Russia, Somalia and Togo. We know that for some families these outings were their only trips beyond the inner city during the school break.

Positive feedback included the following comment from a parent:

**“My children really liked everything they participated in: swimming; Beaudesert Park and the train trip. I think everything was fantastic. Many thanks for everything.”**



Beaudesert Park



Ash End Children's Farm

Restore was greatly assisted by

- the team of 12 volunteers who contributed to the planning and action of the days
- those who gave time or resources - the Iona Community West Midlands family group hosted our activity at Beaudesert Park, John Smith (Trustee of the Bryant Trust) contributed meat from a farm shop for a BBQ at the Cotswold Country Park, and the Columban Religious Order and Solihull Welcome volunteers were generous in their hospitality at our activity in Solihull.
- those who contributed financially - donations from Solihull Welcome volunteers, the Hilden Charitable Trust, Bournville Quakers and sponsorship money raised through Restore's 'Many Voices' event.

## Training & Awareness Raising Courses in 2010

**'Who is fleeing persecution and seeking sanctuary?'**  
**5 courses attended by 89 people**

Restore's training sessions are offered on a no obligation basis to anyone who wants to learn more about refugee and asylum issues. The course provides an introduction to the work of Restore, an overview of refugee issues, an explanation of the asylum application process and the possible outcomes, and a look at the practicalities of befriending, including boundaries and guidelines. Befrienders shared their experience of befriending and refugees joined us to talk of their journey through the asylum process. This personal sharing was greatly appreciated by those attending. The courses also included several interactive elements.

Obviously Restore hopes that some attendees will become volunteer befrienders, but raising awareness or training volunteers for other groups is also an important role. Churches Together Halesowen Welcome Group commented: **"We always make sure, in fact it is in our constitution, that our volunteers train with Restore. All our volunteers receive such a lot out of the training, which helps them to help the visitors who attend our drop-in."**

During 2010 we strengthened our link with the BMS (Baptist Mission Society) Training Centre. They now give their trainees the opportunity of service as volunteer befrienders with Restore to gain valuable cross-cultural experience before serving in other countries. We also gained trainees and befrienders from other new 'sources' - 2 people on an internship at a church and a student social worker on placement at Birmingham Cathedral. In the autumn we saw an upsurge in male trainees and applicants. This was a great development as we are always short of male befrienders.

One new befriender who attended a training course in 2010 wrote: **"I found the training I got at Restore very informative and insightful into the many issues that asylum seekers and refugees face in Britain. Throughout the process of training and meeting my befriender I have felt supported as a befriender and look forward to getting to know my befriender more."**

## Open Meetings in 2010

**3 Open Meetings to provide on-going training and information and Restore's Annual Meeting and Birthday Celebration**

The aims of our Open Meetings are to provide updating and on-going training for volunteers and supporters, but also to offer informal support as people have the opportunity to interact. We are encouraged that befrienders find them helpful: **"We commend both the relevance and the quality of Restore's Open Meetings."** All are welcome to join us: befrienders, supporters, volunteers from other agencies, refugees and people seeking sanctuary.

**January 2010:** Mohinder Kaur from RSVP (the Rape and Sexual Violence Project) talked about the project's work. It is encouraging to know there is a local service dedicated to helping the victims of such violence deal with the trauma they carry. It was a heavy topic, but we recognised that this was an issue which had affected some of our clients – both male and female.

**April 2010:** We focused on 'What to do if you receive Indefinite Leave to Remain' (through the Case Resolution process). Dr Elizabeth Corrie, Legal Caseworker with The Rights Partnership, outlined people's legal entitlements and Restore staff gave input on benefits and accommodation issues.

**June 2010:** We held our Annual Meeting and 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party with keynote speaker Revd Toby Howarth (Vicar of St Christopher's Church, Springfield, and Interfaith Adviser to the Anglican Bishop of Birmingham) who inspired us to be involved in prophetic action that challenges the status quo and supports the marginalised. There were also reflections on Restore's work in 2009 and an opportunity to enjoy refreshments together.

**September 2010:** Andy Jolly from the Children's Society looked at the issue of Destitution amongst refugee and asylum seeking families. Andy stated the number of people who were destitute in the UK was undocumented but estimates ranged from 285,000 to 500,000. It was also estimated that 12% of those who were destitute had children, so many children are affected by this issue despite living in a welfare state.

A further meeting on the issue of 'Helping people into work' was scheduled for November but postponed until January 2011 due to snow.

### **'A Time to Share' in 2010**

We were aware that more could be done to support our valuable team of volunteers. Some organisations would insist on compulsory one-to-one 'supervision' sessions. Restore has not taken that route. Staff are not qualified to offer that service nor is there time available. However, there was a distinct awareness that one-to-one befriending can sometimes be a lonely experience for the volunteer and that befrienders do hear a lot of information and therefore carry 'burdens' they may wish to share. How could they do that beyond contacting staff members to talk through issues or through informal contact with others at Open Meetings?

Restore was approached by Sister Clare at the Bethany Centre of Spirituality in Olton, exploring whether they could offer Restore any support. As a result of that invitation, 'A Time to Share' was hosted there on Saturday 27 February 2010. This was attended by 11 befrienders. The event was excellently facilitated by Revd John Austen and gave befrienders the opportunity to look at their motivation, their frustrations and where they needed more support.

One participant shared afterwards: **"I greatly appreciated the day, 'A Time to Share', which gave befrienders an opportunity to share experiences and good and bad feelings thoughtfully and with laughter."**

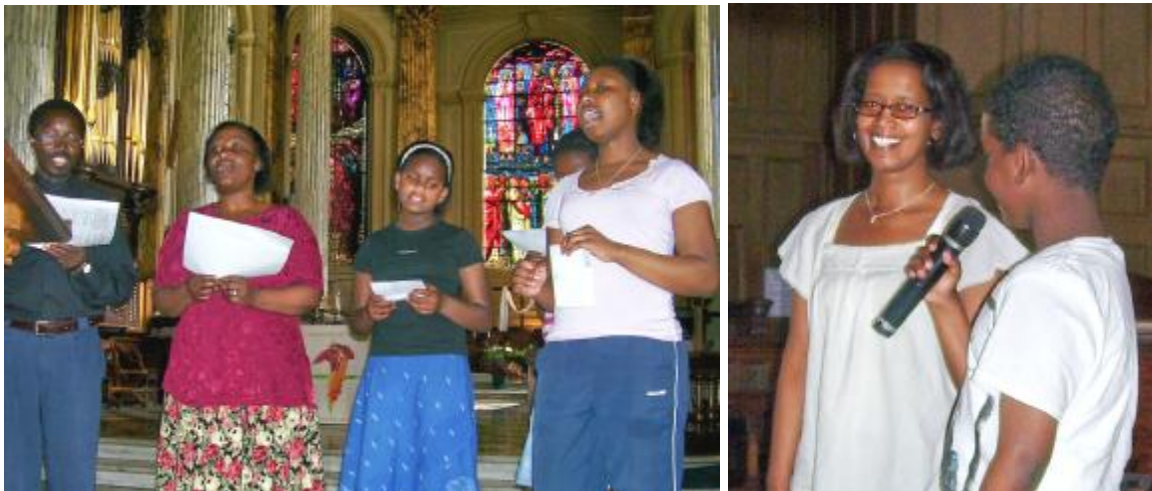
Those present registered an interest in further sharing events. Another outcome was a request for the opportunity to complete a written annual review. In the past we had sent a written review form to befrienders after 6 months or so of befriending. So annual review forms were devised and sent to long-term befrienders in December. Befrienders have found this opportunity to reflect and review helpful and the process has provided valuable information about those relationships to Restore staff.

## Many Voices 2010

### Multilingual sponsored sing, read and speak, embracing 42 languages

Many Voices 2010, our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual multilingual sponsored sing, read and speak, was held on Saturday 22 May 2010 at Birmingham (Anglican) Cathedral. The format was similar but not identical to previous years – with solos, groups, readers and speakers using a wide range of languages.

The key difference this year was that we attempted to use the event to raise awareness of Restore's work. A father and son spoke about the summer holiday programme in Mongolian and English respectively. A mother was translated from Tigrinya to English by her son, on the same theme. A new befriender and her befriendees spoke about their relationship in German and Bafang and then translated for each other into English. This was a good development and hopefully enabled some people to learn more about Restore's work.



Well over 100 people including children attended the event and heard 42 languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Aramaic, Bafang, Bangla, Bari, Bemba, Cantonese, English, Dutch, Farsi, French, Gangulou, German, Greek, Hindi, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Kikongo, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Latin, Luba, Lusoga, Mongolian, Nepali, Pidgin, Romanian, Ruganda, Rukiga, Runyankore, Russian, Shona, Spanish, Tamil, Tigrinya, Urdu, Xhosa, Yoruba and Zulu.

We were grateful to all who participated, including the singing group 'Global Harmony' who contributed 15 languages – mainly through singing 'God is so good' in 13 languages! Those attending also joined in well with the planned, and impromptu, communal singing, which included attempting 'He's got the whole world in his hands' in English, Spanish, Romanian and German.

At the end of Many Voices 2010 one first time participant thanked us profusely for inviting him as he had enjoyed the event so much!

Many Voices 2010 raised just over £1,600 including Gift Aid, which was used to help fund Restore's social activities. However, the greatest element of the event is the opportunity to come together as the Restore community to celebrate our unity and diversity in a very creative way.

## Voucher Exchange Scheme in 2010

A further significant activity in 2010 was the running of Restore's voucher exchange scheme, which entailed sponsors from the host community exchanging gift cards for cash. Those on Section 4 cashless support were able to receive money for their vouchers, giving them greater dignity and choice in their buying.

In July 2010 the UK Border Agency made it more difficult to exchange vouchers. Acknowledging the ongoing hardship for those on Section 4 support, Restore has joined the call for an end to cashless support, encouraged shopping partners to link with an asylum seeker, and has met with the Regional Director of UKBA to discuss this discriminatory practice.

## Working for change

Beyond befriending and social activities, Restore also seeks to engage its supporters in advocacy and lobbying on matters of concern. In May 2010 Restore filled a coach of people from greater Birmingham, who attended the Citizens UK pre-election rally addressed by Cameron, Clegg and Brown. Some follow-up lobbying took place on the campaign to end the detention of children for immigration purposes.

In October 2010 following the announcement of the Birmingham City Council to no longer accommodate asylum seekers, Restore encouraged people to write to their local councillors and/or to Councillor Whitby (Leader of the Council) and Councillor Lines (Cabinet Member for Housing) to express their dismay. The Presidents of Birmingham Churches Together, following an appeal from Restore, also voiced concern.

## International Carol Service – December 2010

This was a great celebration despite the snowy weather. 130 people congregated at St Catherine of Sienna Catholic Church for a vibrant celebration of the birth of Jesus. Participants included the Columban Lay Missionaries, 'Global Harmony' and the Eritrean Catholic Choir. There were readings from the nativity story in French, Swahili, Cantonese and Farsi and a short drama about Mary and Herod, which highlighted that Jesus was a refugee. There was an unexpected experience for an asylum seeker participant: **"At the International Carol Service, I met a friend of mine from my country who I knew was in the UK but I had never met him in UK before because of travel difficulties."**

## Winter Parties for families and adults

- 1 winter party event attended by 40 children and their parents**
- 1 Christmas party event for 42 men and women**

Each year in January the church community at St John's Church, Harborne, generously provides party food, craft, entertainment and gifts. Families left with beaming faces, clutching bags of food and new toys.

Similarly in December, there was a Christmas party for adults. 2010 was our best Christmas party ever! 42 men and women were entertained with party games, feasted on puddings, and for a short time could put their burdens to one side. It was great to see so much laughter and fun!

**DETAILED STATEMENT FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
RESTORE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

	General Fund £	Restricted Funding £	Total £	2009 Total £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Grants other	2,250	42,000	44,250	97,470
Donations	21,632	3,920	25,552	27,019
Fundraising	2,159	-	2,159	2,182
Bank Interest	277	-	277	1,439
Other	775	-	775	-
	27,093	45,920	73,013	128,110
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Befriending Scheme	-	58,474	58,474	49,719
Resource & Publicity	-	245	245	180
Training	-	501	501	402
Co-ordinator	-	35,366	35,366	30,970
Administration	3,594	-	3,594	-
Office Expenses	-	13,557	13,557	9,783
Accountancy Charges	258	-	258	383
Programme Activities	11,172	-	11,172	8,694
	15,024	108,143	123,167	100,131
Net Incoming Resources	12,069	(62,223)	(50,154)	27,979
Transfers between funds	(29,955)	29,955	-	-
Fund Balance at 1 January 2010	114,468	37,768	152,236	124,257
Fund Balance at 31 December 2010	96,582	5,500	102,082	152,236

This statement is for information only and does not form part of the Statutory Financial Statements.

## Challenges and opportunities for Restore in 2011

- During the early part of 2011 the staff and Management Committee will be reviewing the work of Restore and seeking vision for the future.
- The financial cuts are having a significant impact on the refugee sector, e.g. the Refugee Council will lose 50% of its funding in Birmingham and the RIES (Refugee Integration and Employment Service) will close in autumn 2011.
- There are changes in the experience of our clients. Restore now serves 3 distinct groups: many have refugee status or ILR and therefore have permission to work; there are people still seeking sanctuary and waiting for decisions on their asylum applications; and there are those who are at the end of the asylum process and destitute. What will Restore's future response be to these groups of people?
- The outcome of the vision process will feed into the search for new income, which will be needed as significant funding from a few charitable trusts ended in December 2010.

## Staff, Management Committee and Trustees in 2010

Project Coordinator	Shari Brown
Befriending Coordinator	Jeremy Thompson
Befriending Support Worker (until May)	Sarah Dixon
Befriending Support Worker (from June)	Jessica Poyner
Administrative Assistant (from May)	Geraldine Hunt
Chair of Management Committee (until June)	Howard Saunders
Chair of Management Committee (from June)	Susan Height
Honorary Secretary (until December)	Rebecca Gash
Treasurer (until October)	Gillian Bryan
Treasurer (from November)	Natalie Chong
Other Management Committee Members	June Fluck (until June) Elizabeth Corrie (from June) Andy Jolly (from June) Mohinder Kaur (from June) Steve Holland Ngoma Linganzi Sue Morgan Philip Rogerson Musiiwa Takavarasha
Trustees of Birmingham Churches Together	
The Roman Catholic Archbishop	Most Revd Bernard Longley
The Anglican Bishop	Rt Revd David Urquhart
The Free Churches Moderator	Major Samuel Edgar
Anglican Archdeacon	Venerable Hayward Osborne
Honorary Secretary	Mrs Nan Haigh
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Michael Hastilow