

# Mentoring and Befriending Foundation Impact Report 2010



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**Our mission** is to support the expansion of quality mentoring and befriending provision across all sectors.

**Our vision** is of a society where mentoring and befriending can empower all people to reach their full potential.

### The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation:

- Believes in equality of opportunity and the role that mentoring and befriending can play in helping to address issues of inequality
- Respects the diversity of individuals, communities and groups supported by different mentoring and befriending schemes
- Is committed to supporting the provision of high-quality mentoring and befriending services through the development of good practice guidance, quality standards and accreditation opportunities
- Engages with mentoring and befriending providers in effective communication and consultation

# Overview from Chief Executive

‘We worked hard to make the case for mentoring and befriending and support projects in their efforts to maximise the impact and quality of their work.’

The year 2010-2011 has been a period of major change for MBF and the mentoring and befriending organisations we support, as the results of our own research, referred to later in this report, will confirm.

It was also a year of renewal for MBF. We developed and implemented a new strategy for the next three years. We relocated our HQ to more accessible offices in central Manchester. We put in place new governance arrangements to ensure stronger representation from practitioners and our strategic contacts.

Against this backdrop we worked hard to make the case for mentoring and befriending and support projects in their efforts to maximise the impact and quality of their work.

We carried through a far-reaching programme of work with important achievements across the range of our activities.

We co-ordinated a major campaign entitled ‘Supporting Life’s Journeys’, to promote mentoring and befriending, which brought together many hundreds of people and involved events throughout the UK.

We undertook a major review of the APS quality standard and introduced a number of improvements to reinforce its status as the benchmark standard for mentoring and befriending. We developed and expanded the range of training courses and other services provided to the sector to improve skills and ensure quality of provision. In collaboration with Skills for Justice we introduced new National Occupational Standards for volunteer-based mentoring and befriending.

This report shows how we performed against our targets for 2010 and records our activities over the past year, documents our achievements and also identifies important areas for future development. It also contains the personal stories of some of the people we have helped.

Steve Matthews  
**Chief Executive**



# What we do

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation supports the growth and development of mentoring and befriending across all sectors. We provide advice, guidance and support to organisations, promote quality and good practice and work with others to demonstrate the difference mentoring and befriending make to peoples' lives.



## We provide advice, guidance and support

- We offer advice, guidance and support to those who wish to invest in, set up or develop mentoring and befriending projects.
- We offer a comprehensive programme of training support to equip projects with the skills and capabilities they need to be successful.

## We promote quality and good practice

- We award the Approved Provider Standard (APS), the national quality standard for mentoring and befriending projects and a benchmark for safe and effective practice.
- We provide a membership network for projects to share good practice, learn from one another and consider better ways of doing things

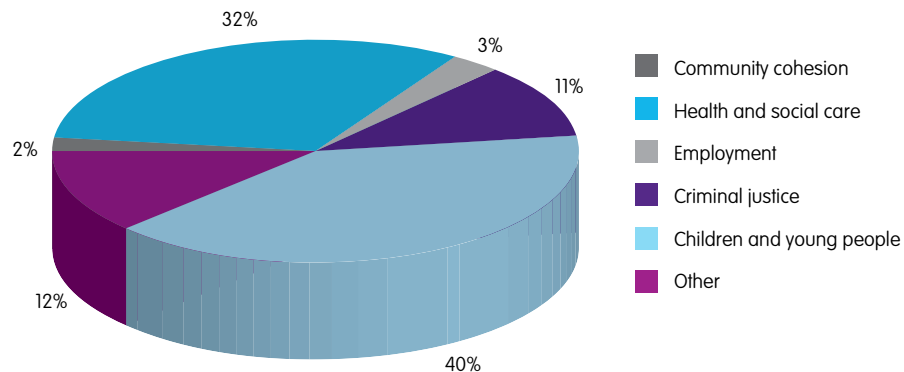
## We work with others to demonstrate the difference mentoring and befriending makes

- We work hard to highlight how mentoring and befriending can be used to bring about lasting changes to peoples' lives and strengthen the argument for more investment.
- We support and encourage mentoring and befriending projects to measure their outcomes and work to increase understanding of the real impact mentoring and befriending has on peoples' lives.

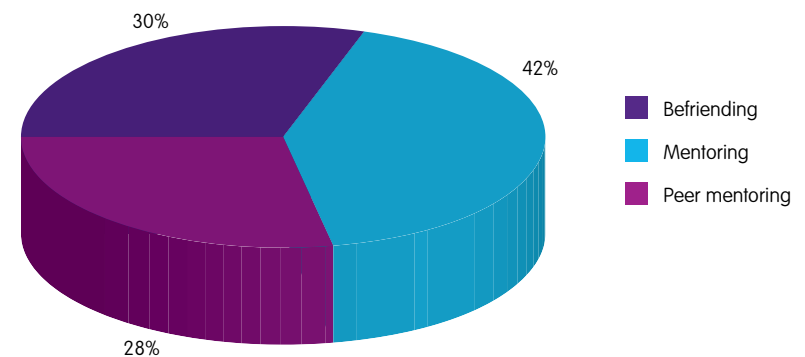
# What we achieved

- Over **90%** of those who accessed MBF support felt it helped them to improve the quality of their project and its services
- Over **560** mentoring and befriending projects have achieved MBF's quality award ( the Approved Provider Standard), with a further **160** committed to achieving the award within the next 12 months
- Over **80,000** unique visits to the new MBF website
- **4,400** documents downloaded from our website – including free information sheets, good practice guides and policy statements
- **12,000** visitors used our website to find their nearest mentoring or befriending scheme
- **1,400** mentoring and befriending supporters signed up to MBF's 'Supporting Life's Journeys' campaign' to raise the profile of mentoring and befriending
- Over **500** mentoring and befriending practitioners participated in the 2010 National Training Programme, with courses attracting 90% plus satisfaction ratings
- **80** new campaign ambassadors signed up to champion the benefits of mentoring and befriending in their local areas as part of 'Supporting Life's Journeys'
- **Six** detailed policy responses submitted on government policy agendas

### APS approved projects according to main client group



### APS approved projects according to project type



# Making it count

'MBF gave our organisation the opportunity to come together with other projects and voice opinions, provide feedback and network. This in turn allows MBF to inform government on issues that they would be unaware of. MBF are our voice and this is vital to projects up and down the country.'

Care for the Carers

## What we planned to do

- Influence national policy/practice in relation to mentoring and befriending
- Work with key voluntary and community sector organisations and other strategic contacts to engage in joint development work
- Engage with commissioners and funders to promote the value of and encourage investment in mentoring and befriending

## What we delivered

### Influencing national policy/practice

- We engaged with government departments to promote the interests of the sector and helped to improve and strengthen policy and practice in relation to mentoring and befriending
- We produced our own agenda for the Big Society
- We led a major profile-raising campaign, *Supporting Life's Journeys*, to promote the value of mentoring and befriending in the context of the 'European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion'
- Both during and following the General Election, we helped support projects through advice and guidance to build better links with political representatives at local and national levels

- We created sector consultation groups to collect grassroots views and provided detailed responses to six consultations and White Papers during the year in relation to key areas of policy, including early intervention, services for young people, families and relationships and supporting a stronger civil society

### Strategic contacts

- We supported Volunteering England's ESV regional pilots by linking up quality mentoring and befriending opportunities with employers
- We developed joint funding proposals with key partners including The Prince's Trust, CSV, Brightside UNIAID and Business in the Community
- We worked with Clinks to produce volunteering and mentoring guides for projects working in the justice sector
- We established a European Charter for mentoring and befriending, with partners from across the E.U., with developments incorporating a new website, shared opportunities for training and a consistent approach to quality standards

# Making it count

## Encouraging investment in mentoring and befriending

- We carried out a funding survey of mentoring and befriending projects in the voluntary and statutory sectors which highlighted the uncertainty and pressures that many of them are under as they compete for funding and longer-term survival.
- We organised a series of events to open a dialogue between commissioners, funders and project managers
- We co-ordinated a national campaign to communicate the positive impact of mentoring and befriending and encourage further investment
- We extended the National Training Programme to include additional training on accessing funding
- We published two guides, 'Promising Returns' one directed at commissioners and one for non-statutory funders which offer guidance and information on investing in mentoring and befriending services

## What we learned

We've engaged successfully with key government departments, notably the Office for Civil Society and the Department for Education. We have provided an important service by disseminating and interpreting government policies and plans to the organisations and practitioners that we support. No less important is our role in reflecting the views of the sector back to government.

In addition to our main funders, we need to develop links with other government departments and build on existing government contacts developed during the 'Supporting Life's Journeys' campaign, particularly those in the three national assemblies.

We will also introduce a sector-focussed approach to developing this work, as, for example, in the fields of youth justice and health and social care. By strengthening our engagement with practitioners in these specialist areas we will be better equipped to reflect their views and liaise with government on their behalf. Our newly created sector consultation groups can make an important contribution in helping us to achieve this goal.

We believe that the national infrastructure support provided by the MBF played a key role in enabling mentoring and befriending projects to build their capacity and compete for the commissioning of services. Our recent survey of projects in support of the Office for Civil Society's consultation on improving support for frontline civil society organisations provides strong evidence in support of this view.

**86% of respondents thought that mentoring and befriending projects needed the specialist advice and support of a national infrastructure organisation like MBF**

The economic downturn means that less funding is available for projects. We must continue to work hard to convince commissioners and funders of the importance and cost effectiveness of mentoring and befriending. We have found that bringing funders and commissioners together with projects is a powerful way of putting across the message of how mentoring and befriending can support individuals and make a difference to their lives.

# Promoting growth

## What we planned to do

- Revise and update the MBF website as one of a series of measures to upgrade information services to users
- Introduce new training courses, with an emphasis on building the capacity of mentoring and befriending projects during the economic downturn
- Develop a model for mentoring using employer supported volunteering (ESV)

'I felt supported and encouraged by MBF. Advice and information to an exceptional standard, everything you need to run a project'

Redbridge Befriending Scheme

## What we delivered

### Website provision

We updated our website during 2010 adding a new searchable directory of projects that had achieved our quality award.

The website features an information section to support projects during the recession, a resource library news and events and details of our national training programme. It includes links to Government support and funding initiatives plus links to alternative sources of advice, information and resources.

Much of our web-based information is freely available, including information sheets, good practice guides and policy briefings. Website statistics showed:

- **84,000** unique visits to our new website
- **12,000** visitors used our website to find their nearest scheme
- **4,400** documents downloaded from our website – including free good practice publications, information sheets and policy statements

### Events and conferences

MBF is well known for the quality of its events at both national and regional level and we continue to receive **90%** plus satisfaction ratings from those attending.

A total of **111** events were held over the year attracting over **1400** delegates. These events included training courses, networking and consultation events, conferences and workshops.

## National training programme

Our experience of running conferences and events has helped to ensure the success of the National Training Programme (NTP).

As part of our commitment to increase the knowledge and skills of practitioners and respond to developments in the sector, we launched a number of new courses including:

- Advanced skills for trainers of mentors and befrienders
- Intergenerational mentoring and befriending
- Befrienders for the 21st Century
- On-line mentoring

In 2010 over **500** practitioners attended our training courses, an increase of over **15%** on numbers for the previous year.

- **96%** of those attending said that the training met course expectations
- **94%** rated the training they received as 'good' or 'excellent'
- **89%** said that the training had helped them to improve the quality of their mentoring and befriending projects
- **91%** rated their knowledge after training as high or very high

# Promoting growth

'Enjoyed workshop and that there were a number of speakers in it. Given ideas about how we could provide employee volunteering - great!'

## What we learned

These figures confirm there is a demand for MBF to provide up to date, high quality advice and guidance services through website provision, training materials and courses.

Our own monitoring shows that we receive excellent feedback and continue to achieve the intended outcomes for users. Feedback on the NTP training was particularly strong, as the results of the course evaluations show.

'Came not thinking we would be able to set up a peer mentoring programme and thinking the day would be a waste of time. How wrong I was. Definitely going to make this work!'

We've responded to feedback from users of the website and will be launching a **new site in April 2011** with new features including an expanded directory of projects, discussion forums, a good practice bank and more case studies demonstrating return on investment and running of projects.

We need to make more progress in taking forward the growth of mentoring and befriending in the business sector, and encourage employer-supported volunteering (ESV) working alongside organisations like Volunteering England and Business in the Community.

We believe that quality mentoring programmes can help to develop employee skills and contribute to employers' corporate and social responsibility objectives. Our plans for 2011 include proposals to develop a model for ESV mentoring.

'Glad you exist to bring us together/train us. The course has given a practical outline and guides to follow. Very useful, thanks.'



# Raising the profile

## What we planned to do

- Organise a major national campaign to increase public understanding of the value of mentoring and befriending
- Introduce a regional and national awards programme for mentoring and befriending projects, volunteers and service users

## What we delivered

In 2010 our plans to raise the profile of mentoring and befriending were taken forward under the umbrella of the campaign 'Supporting Life's Journeys'. With financial backing from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the initiative was linked with activities to support the 'European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion'. The aims of the campaign were to:

- Improve understanding of what mentoring and befriending is
- Raise awareness of the value that mentoring and befriending projects bring to communities and individuals across the UK
- Protect and encourage further investment in mentoring and befriending from funders and commissioners
- Raise public engagement in mentoring and befriending by involving the public in a celebration of mentoring and befriending

## Results of the campaign

- A national mentoring and befriending awards programme which attracted the attendance of over 600 delegates and 275 project nominations. The events also drew widespread media attention, with over 120 pieces of local, regional and national media coverage

'The Robins Ward Befriending Scheme makes a huge difference to our patients and, therefore, contributes to our priorities. Over 200 volunteer "Robins" work alongside staff to support patients with practical and emotional needs, this demonstrates partnership working at its best.'

Mary Burrows, Chief Executive, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board



# Raising the profile

- An interactive website incorporating material from over 30 case studies and an online toolkit to encourage campaigning at local level. The website attracted over 3775 unique visitors. Over 1400 people expressed support for the campaign by signing the online pledge.
- The completion of an impact survey of volunteers and service users to research the positive outcomes of mentoring and befriending and identify the contexts where the involvement of a mentor or befriender has been of value. Over 300 responses were received from people who had benefitted from mentoring or befriending support.
- The creation of over 80 campaign ambassadors with experience of issues that lead to poverty and/or social exclusion to champion the benefits of mentoring and befriending. Of those who attended the regional launch events and heard from the campaign ambassadors, 80% expressed an interest in learning more about mentoring and befriending opportunities in their region.

**'A really good event that celebrated the great work that is going on in UK mentoring. We were really chuffed to win and it will help us sustain our work locally.'**

Steve Spiers, Breakthrough

## **What we learned**

**'The campaign was really brilliant. I would like to see more stuff like this.'**

Twenty Twenty

**'Befriending and mentoring play key roles in helping us provide support to vulnerable members of society. Ensuring we take the time to spend with others who may be feeling alone is one of best things we can do to ensure people feel part of society.'**

Alex Neil, Minister for Housing and Communities, Scottish Government

The campaign generated a valuable legacy. Activities were taken forward at local, regional and national levels, creating an infrastructure that can serve as a springboard for future developments. The campaign identified local examples of good practice; with smaller, local mentoring and befriending projects displaying a comprehensive knowledge of community needs and of building relationships with 'hard to reach' groups.



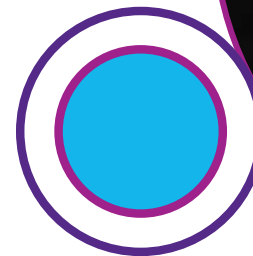
# Raising the profile

Campaign ambassadors and regional award winners were offered further training, enabling them to continue in their role of champions for mentoring and befriending in their local areas.

'I am delighted that the Breakthrough mentoring project has been recognised as the Befriending Project of the Year 2010 through the UK Mentoring and Befriending Awards. Breakthrough not only complements our universal delivery by catering for people who require a more specialist service but also leads to direct cost savings for South Gloucestershire Council.'

Kim Hazeldine, Commissioning Manager, South Gloucestershire Council

Our involvement has strengthened our relationships with government and helped to keep mentoring and befriending on the political agenda. The DWP and Cabinet Office were both closely involved in the planning and the devolved assemblies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were also partners and contributed to elements of the campaign.



# Improving quality

## What we planned to do

- Launch the revised Approved Provider Standard (APS), our quality standard for mentoring and befriending projects
- Develop accredited training opportunities for volunteer mentors and befrienders and project co-ordinators

## What we delivered

### Approved Provider Standard

APS is at the centre of our work to improve the quality of mentoring and befriending provision. Projects need to be able to demonstrate that they are well managed and effective. APS provides a recognised quality standard against which they can benchmark their provision.



'The support we received from MBF to help us achieve the APS was invaluable. The APS has, and continues to be, a fantastic tool which supports all aspects of our work.'

West Norfolk Mencap

It also gives commissioners and funders the reassurance that the services provided are safe and effective.

'APS demonstrates that an organisation has taken appropriate steps to ensure that key issues such as staff training, working arrangements and risk assessment processes are properly in place and that they would be a suitable organisation to work with.'

Mike Kirkby, Regional Manager (Commissioning), NOMS North East

A major review of the standard was completed during the year to ensure it remains rigorous, current and relevant to all sizes and types of organisation that provide mentoring and befriending. Major changes included:

- Assessment visits for all applicants registering under the new standard plus a detailed assessment report
- A new support package including diagnostic assessment, action planning and assessment preparation support

### APS statistics

Our aim in 2010 was to reach the milestone of 500 APS accredited projects, and we exceeded this target, achieving a figure of over **560** accredited projects. In addition, a further **110** projects committed to 'working towards' achieving the standard.

# Improving quality

## Accredited training opportunities

- We worked with Skills for Justice to develop a suite of National Occupational Standards for mentoring and befriending with offenders. The new standards provide a benchmark for supporting the development and training of volunteer mentors, befrienders and project staff within the sector. A draft qualification structure was developed, enabling a national Development Award for mentoring to be included in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
- In partnership with ASDAN we introduced a short course award to enable peer mentors and project co-ordinators gain accreditation for their work. Over 360 peer mentors and project co-ordinators signed up for the award during the year

## What we learned

The revised APS quality award is in its first year of operation as a fee-based standard and the early signs are positive. The extra support, on-site visits and detailed assessment report, have all been well received.

We achieved our aim of over 500 APS accredited projects. Growth in the number of organisations committed to 'working towards' the standard provides encouraging evidence of our capacity to sustain and increase interest in the award.

APS is integral to the work of MBF and achievement of its aims. Our follow up survey shows that it is having a positive impact on both the management of projects and the quality of services to users.

- **92%** of respondents felt that it had helped them to improve the quality of their programme
- **94%** of respondents felt that it had supported the effective design and delivery of their programme
- **82%** of respondents felt that it had helped them to evidence the impact of their programme

There are also indications that the new APS is proving increasingly important in helping projects to attract funding support.



# Evidencing impact

## What we planned to do

- Produce evidence to demonstrate the positive outcomes of peer mentoring in schools
- Publish research to demonstrate the positive impact and added value of mentoring and befriending
- Equip projects with the means to measure outcomes and evaluate the impact of their work

## What we delivered

### Peer mentoring

With the support of the Department for Education we piloted initiatives to promote development of peer mentoring. We completed a two year programme to combat bullying in schools. **150 schools** participated in the initiative, including primary, secondary and special needs schools. **6000 peer mentors** were recruited and trained to take part in anti bullying programmes.

An independent evaluation of the initiative conducted by the Children's Society Research Unit found that:

- **63%** of the 'most bullied' students who were mentored experienced a reduction in victimisation
- **60%** of the peer mentors felt they had 'made a difference' to the lives of the pupils they had worked with
- One in three school co-ordinators reported an improvement in the levels of bullying

'I wanted a peer mentor because I had been bullied and even though it was sorted I didn't know if it would happen again and I didn't have any friends to talk about it and back me up. My peer mentor is ace and I feel a lot better about everything.'

Mentee, Outwood Academy, Ardwick, Yorkshire

'I feel like I've learnt a lot. Communications skills, being reliable enough to turn up and do a good job and by helping them I've become more focused myself.'

Mentor, Outwood Academy, Ardwick, Yorkshire

## Published research

Published at the beginning of the year, our report 'Transforming Lives' shows the extent to which volunteer mentors and befrienders can improve outcomes for people with very different needs. It also reveals how mentoring and befriending are contributing to key government goals such as:

- Promoting 'active citizenship'
- Providing role models for vulnerable young people
- Helping to reduce re-offending

The publication 'Befriending Works' provides an overview of how befriending is being delivered in communities to improve the health and well being of vulnerable people, reduce social isolation and contribute to wider local priorities.

# Evidencing impact

'This excellent report provides evidence that formally recognises what many of us in the voluntary sector have known for a long time. It shows that befriending is an extremely valuable and cost-effective intervention; utilising local community resources which enable vulnerable and socially-excluded people to live more independent and fulfilled lives.'

Kyra Bond, Manager, Womankind

## Measuring outcomes

If we are to demonstrate the impact of mentoring and befriending, individual projects must be equipped with the knowledge and means to measure outcomes and evaluate the work that they do. To assist this process:

- We launched a two year programme to improve evaluation processes and measure the impact of peer mentoring in schools
- We introduced a series of practitioner training courses on the use of effective monitoring and evaluation practice
- We published an 'outcomes toolkit' and established a directory of over 200 project evaluations to be used as 'good practice' guides, available to practitioners on the new MBF website

## What we learned

Our research into the benefits of mentoring and befriending show that they can help improve outcomes for a wide range of people with different needs. We will continue to undertake research and develop resources to measure the added value and cost benefits of mentoring and befriending, including the potential savings in reduced dependence on high cost services.

Nowhere is our research contribution more evident than in the evaluation of peer mentoring, where there is a growing body of evidence to support the value of programmes in schools. The results show that:

- Peer mentoring offers a cost effective and sustainable solution to raising the achievement and aspirations of children and young people as well as supporting their development
- Peer mentoring can play a crucial role in providing targeted support for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people
- Peer mentoring provides an opportunity for young people to learn about and experience volunteering as part of their educational experience and personal development
- According to the data, over a third of all schools in England now have some form of peer mentoring/ support provision

'Peer mentoring is a vital part of the support which we can offer our students in primary and secondary schools throughout Neath Port Talbot.'

Karl Napieralla, OBE, Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

We are making steady progress in developing an evidence base to measure and evaluate the impact of mentoring and befriending.

However, there is still more work to do. Projects need clearer guidance on how to demonstrate the costs and benefits of mentoring and befriending and we need to build on our work with commissioners and funders to promote the benefits of investing in mentoring and befriending alongside other services.

# Planning for future impact

We intend to build on our achievements to date by using what we have learned to improve our services. We will share the findings with the people we support and work with them to make MBF more effective in the future.

We anticipate that budgets will be under strain. All of our target markets are affected by the recession and cuts in public spending. We need to diversify our funding sources, and increase our trading revenue.

Mentoring and befriending have gained in significance and we must work hard to capitalise on the opportunities offered by the need for businesses to demonstrate their corporate responsibility and the Government's desire to create the Big Society.

In 2010 we delivered more activities to and for people than ever before. We are proud of this achievement but equally we know that it is not how much we do but the impact of what we do that matters.

We will face significant challenges in the period ahead. We must be clear about our priorities and what we need to do to increase our impact. We have conducted a review of organisational aims, strategy and services. Our new strategic plan will form a framework for our activities in 2011 and beyond.

In 2011 we will be:

- Launching an improved MBF membership scheme to help us engage with and respond more effectively to the needs of our supporter base
- Making the case for employer-supported volunteering (ESV) mentoring schemes and promoting this to business
- Organising a national conference and introducing sector specific conferences
- Developing new products and services to support the development and expansion of the Approved Provider Standard
- Supporting the launch of the new nationally accredited qualification for volunteer mentors and befrienders, including the provision of MBF training and resource materials
- Offering mentoring consultancy and mentor skills training to different sectors
- Researching the added value and cost benefits of mentoring and befriending
- Developing an outcomes measurement tool for use by schools-based mentoring projects



Mentoring and Befriending Foundation,  
Suite 1, 4th Floor,  
Building 3, Universal Square,  
Devonshire Street North,  
Ardwick, Manchester, M12 6JH

[www.mandbf.org](http://www.mandbf.org)  
[info@mandbf.org](mailto:info@mandbf.org)  
03300 882877