



**rock trust**

BECAUSE EVERY YOUNG PERSON  
HAS POTENTIAL

**What an amazing year 2008/09 has been!** As well as maintaining all of our existing services we were successful in developing a range of new ones including a social networks service in West Lothian and an 'into employment' project called 'The Step Up Project' in Edinburgh. The year reached a successful culmination when we were awarded contracts from the City of Edinburgh Council to deliver new services to people who are in crisis and homeless (this being achieved in partnership with other like-minded charities).

We were delighted that the quality of our work received strong national recognition including finalist status at the Herald Society Awards and a commendation within the New Philanthropy Capital report 'Lost Property'. This was in recognition of our work in the field of social networks support.

**A central aim that we had for the year was to develop the voice of the young people that we work with – encouraging and supporting them to take a greater role in saying what we should be doing and how we should be doing it.**

We have been delighted that this ambition has been matched by our young people, who have taken to it with great enthusiasm. A young person's participation group was established and this has been working with the Board to plan joint pieces of work. Its members have also now become involved in putting together the Trust's 'Rock Report' newsletter.

Young people were also integral to the Care Commission inspection of our supported accommodation service this year and our inspection officer was particularly impressed with this.

This increased involvement of young people in how the Trust is run, inspected and developed is very welcome.

While all of the above is a great achievement, we are very mindful that this has been a difficult financial year. As the saying goes "every penny is a prisoner". We have continued to scrutinise our costs to ensure that we are spending our money carefully (our one proviso being the need to protect the quality of the service that we provide to our young people). We know that there are increasingly difficult financial years ahead of us, but we are confident that through hard work and good planning, we will be able to continue to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable young people for quite some time to come.

As always, all the work is a direct reflection on the staff and volunteers who take such pride in their involvement with the Trust.

We have exciting plans for the future; we hope you will enjoy reading about our achievements and join us as we continue to work with young people to deliver the right supports at the right time in their lives.



**Ella Simpson**  
Chief Executive



**Romy Langeland**  
Chair

**Housing Support Services.** Over the course of the current reporting period our Housing Support Services worked with 102 young people. The Trust operates a number of such services in Edinburgh and West Lothian and together they account for approximately two thirds of the work that we do with young people.

It is well understood that homelessness is about so much more than a place to stay. Our team of support workers therefore spend much of their time providing a whole range of life skills support that help our young people to manage the transition into successful independent living. Over 75% of those young people moving on from our services did so in a planned and positive way. This gives us confidence that we are getting it right most of the time. It does also highlight that there are still challenges that we must face as we try to make a positive difference to the lives of every young person that we work with.

Over the course of the year we were also successful in helping to link many of the young people up to supports and services that have helped build other areas of their lives including in relation to work, education, training, relationships, and with interests and hobbies. In many cases this has involved working with colleagues in other Rock Trust managed services.

**The team has worked extremely hard over the year to strengthen the voice of young people within the organisation. There is so much that the young people can contribute to the debate of what we do (and how we do it) – and so much that they can get from this experience. This was picked up in our annual inspection by the Care Commission who commended our efforts and graded the overall service that we provide as 'very good'.**

Of course, the current pressure on funding has had an impact and we have had to show a degree of resourcefulness to stay ahead of the field. We were heartened at the end of the period with the awarding of a new Housing Support contract for 3 years with the City of Edinburgh Council. This success was in partnership with a consortium group of charities. The 'Gateway' service (run in partnership with Bethany Christian Trust and Fresh Start) will provide essential support for young people setting up home for the first time. The Rock Trust has had a history of successful partnership working with others and we know that this will continue to be the key to successful working as we look towards the future.

**Youth Development Services.** The Rock Trust believes in developing services that meet the needs of young people. This means that services are constantly developing to ensure young people receive the best services possible.

**Active Futures.** Funded by the Big Lottery Fund, to support young women into physical exercise, the project has been working with groups such as Stepping Stone, Saheyliya, Canongate Youth Project and Sure Start, to support projects already engaging with young women. We have run supported exercise groups for these projects, including streetdance, salsa-cise and body combat. Young women from these groups have gone on to organise their own groups and supported each other to keep attending.

The project also developed a mentoring programme where young women are matched with a mentor who supports them to take part in exercise in their own community. This has encouraged young women, who do not want to take part in groups, to get active.

The development of these extra services has created opportunities for different young women who may not feel comfortable out with their peer group or not comfortable in groups at all. The project has recognised that exercise comes in different forms and to ensure we meet the needs of young women in Edinburgh we have to be flexible in our approach.

**Networks.** The first year of the Networks project has brought with it successes and acclaim across Scotland and England. Funded by the Big Lottery Fund, to support young people to (re)build their relationships and social networks, the project has worked with some of Edinburgh's most isolated young people.

**Due to the success of the Edinburgh project the Laidlaw Youth Trust and Lloyds TSB awarded us funding to run a sister project in West Lothian, to compare and contrast the work we do in a semi urban/rural area. This project has been well received by agencies, working in the areas to support young people, and young people alike.**

In November staff had their hard work recognised by the Herald Society Awards, when they were named as finalists under the Best Practice Initiative Of The Year category. Later in the year Lemos and Crane, who were the original researchers to highlight the impact of social networks on homelessness, asked us to contribute to their website and discuss the methods we use in our projects. This is recognition indeed for the groundbreaking work the project is carrying out.

**Underground.** The Underground has gone through a year of transition in the past twelve months with the new City of Edinburgh Council tenders being announced and the associated change this has had on the homelessness landscape across the city.

In the early part of the year, it was business as usual as we continued to deliver the morning emergency access time, with shower and laundry facilities. We also continued to deliver four drop in sessions with an increased presence from external agencies (providing voluntary inputs on subjects ranging from sexual health, to a hairdresser and dental nurse offering free haircuts and check ups respectively).

Our Parents Group continued to develop as an extremely valuable resource to young parents and expectant parents. The years programme was full of many highlights including useful visits from Health Visitors and a Fire Safety Officer from Lothian & Borders Fire and Rescue Service (who talked to the parents about fire safety in the home). Young Parents who had accessed the group previously were also encouraged to participate as Peer Volunteers within the group. This proved to be very successful in terms of accelerating learning and allowing added responsibility for the planning and running of the groups.

The development and success of the Parents Group was also reflected when project staff Stevie Clark and Alissa Ruane were invited to deliver a presentation on 'Working with Parents in the Context of Youth Work and Homelessness' at a conference in Glasgow organised by One Parent Families Scotland and Aberlour Care. There has also been an increased involvement of project staff providing input into child protection cases and providing intensive 1:1 support to young parents who are involved in child protection cases.

**We were delighted to learn in February 2009 that our efforts to develop new homelessness services (through a competitive tendering process set by The City of Edinburgh Council) had been successful. The outcome of this on the Underground will be the imminent arrival of two brand new services due to launch in April 2009.**

The new 'Crisis' service will be geared up to meet the immediate support needs of young people who find themselves homeless. This will replace the existing morning emergency access service, whilst retaining the shower and laundry facilities as well as specialist crisis support. This service also will include developing the first 'Nightstop' service in the city – a project which we have been keen to develop for some time.

The Underground Team are looking forward to the new and exciting challenges that this work will bring and the benefits that they will bring to the lives of disadvantaged young peoples across the Lothians.

**Scottish Social Networks Forum.** Increased interest in social networks and particularly the training pack was evident throughout the year particularly from local authorities. This seemed to be driven by funding uncertainties and a focus on prevention of homelessness.

Developing Social Networks assessment was the main new area of work in 2008/2009 and a great deal of progress was made in the first three quarters of the year. A workshop in November considered a range of important issues including:

**How we identify individuals who may not have supportive social networks and consequently may be “at risk”?**

**What do we need to know to make an assessment?**

**What questions are already asked and are there gaps?**

**How can we address any gaps without seeming to intrude into clients personal lives?**

**How can this be integrated into existing systems?**

Many local authorities and voluntary sector organisations contributed their time, materials and ideas however piloting of assessments had to be postponed until 2009/10 primarily due to organisational and staff changes in the local authorities involved.

Over the year we worked with Shelter, SACRO and GHN (Glasgow Homelessness Network) to make the training more widely available. We also successfully piloted the training with a range of different organisations (local authorities, voluntary sector and housing associations) and staff (managers, supervisors, trainers and frontline workers and volunteers) working with very different client groups (e.g. homeless, disabled, looked after children and young people, elderly).

We also commissioned an independent evaluation and longitudinal study of the impact of the training. Training sessions were also followed up and participants shared their experience of implementing the training and their ideas for how to take the work forward.

This feedback has helped us to develop and improve the training and toolkit. These new materials will be made available on line in 2009/10.

**Resilience Knowledge Exchange** – The idea of resilience has captured the imagination of professionals and public alike. It has challenged and inspired those working with vulnerable individuals, groups and communities but it has also led to potentially unrealistic expectations, disputes, critical analysis and lively discourse.

Professor Mike Stein, delivering The Rock Trust lecture in October 2008, focused on the resilience of young people in transition. The lecture generated a lot of interest and in response to this, a “Resilience Knowledge Exchange” was held in partnership with The Rock Trust and Stirling University. The aim of the day was to identify what we mean by resilience, the links to social networks, how it can enable young people to prosper in adulthood and what can be done to develop resilience in young adults. In a lively event, facilitated by Malcolm Hill (Research Professor, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow School of Social Work and Associate Director, Centre for Research on Families and Relationships), academics, strategists and practitioners discussed the issues. A report from the day is being prepared by researcher Cheryl Burgess and Brigid Daniel (Professor of Social Work, Department of Applied Sociology, University of Stirling).

**Income Generation.** Like all businesses operating in the current climate we have been feeling the effects of the ongoing financial storm. There has never been a more difficult time for people to give when things have been so tight for everyone.

The Trust has long recognised the importance of not being too dependent on any one source of funding and it has been through pursuing a policy of income diversity that we have been able to keep our head above the water line.

Over the reporting year the Trust was able to bring in around 55% of its finances through local authority contracts. A further 30% came through grant funding from other sources (representing the best year that we have had of support through this means).

Our events continued to play an important role – not only in terms of raising valuable funds, but for raising our profile and introducing new supporters to our work. May saw a team of dedicated runners taking on the challenge of The Edinburgh Marathon. August brought the first summer outing of the Kiltwalk – offering not only kinder weather, but also the vibrancy of Edinburgh in the festival season. Later on in the year our Sleepout set a record number of participants (150) who kindly gave up the comfort of their own bed for one night to lend support to our work.

Of course, we are continually indebted to all the kind support from individuals and community groups who have supported us over the reporting period – through donations of money, gifts in kind and all of the volunteering hours that have been contributed to our cause. Thanks!

## Summary of accounts for the year to 31 March 2009

	2009		2008	
	£	%	£	%
<b>Income</b>				
Donations	129,895	9.7	89,934	7.8
Gift Aid etc.	39,317	2.9	30,187	2.6
Legacies	200	0.0	22,837	2.0
Rents and Support	666,774	49.7	659,721	57.5
Grants	398,918	29.7	235,026	20.5
Local Authority	87,300	6.5	87,354	7.6
Miscellaneous	20,105	1.4	21,553	1.9
	<b>£1,342,509</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>£1,146,612</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Charitable activities	1,119,672	92.9	1,045,538	92.7
Cost of generating voluntary income	74,115	6.1	71,623	6.4
Governance costs	11,525	1.0	10,626	0.9
	<b>£1,205,312</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>£1,127,787</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Loses on investment assets	<b>£31,710</b>		<b>£4,809</b>	

The Rock Trust operated at a surplus of £105,487 after losses on Investment Assets. (2008: Surplus £14,016) In addition to continuing Lottery funding for the Underground and Social Networks projects, grants from the Laidlaw Trust, Voluntary Action Fund, SBAAT and others increased grant income to £398,918 (2008:£235,026). Donations received including Gift Aided donations and tax recovered amounted to £169,212 (2008:£120,121) – an increase of £49,091 compared with the previous year.

These figures are summarised from the published accounts of The Rock Trust for the year ended 31 March 2009. Copies of the full accounts are available on request from the Trust's office. The Trust's auditor is Alexander Sloan, Chartered Accountants, Edinburgh.

## Thank you.

We kindly acknowledge the generous support of the following groups and organisations that have supported us over the year:

- Balfour & Manson LLP • Bank of Scotland • The Big Lottery Fund
- The Churches and Guilds of the Lothians' • City of Edinburgh Council
- The Courant Fund for Children • The Cross Trust • Cruden Trust • Gannochy
- George Watsons • Hugh Fraser Foundation • Jollies • Laidlaw Youth Trust
- Lloyds TSB Foundation • Lothian and Borders Police
- Miss M E Swinton Patterson's Charitable Trust • Nancie Massey Trust • The Plum Trust
- The Robertson Trust • The Royal Bank of Scotland • The Russell Trust • Scocha
- Scottish Business Achievement Award Trust • Souter Trust • Standard Life • Streetsmart
- Voluntary Sector Development Fund • West Lothian Council • YouthLink Scotland



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