

Geoff Wilkins' CV

email gw@geoffwilkins.net

Education:

- 1960-65 Tonbridge School Open Scholarship in Classics to Pembroke College, Cambridge
- 1966-71 Pembroke College, Cambridge First Class honours in both Parts of the Cambridge Classical Tripos (Part II in Classical Linguistics); two years' research in Linguistics; MA

Employment history:

- 1969-72 Part-time Supervisor of Classics at Pembroke College, Cambridge
- 1971-72 Specialist reader (in Classics and Linguistics) for Cambridge University Press
- 1972-73 Freelance writing and work for publishers
- 1973 Community Service Volunteer (CSV) at Hemswell Uganda Asian Resettlement Camp
- 1973-74 CSV with AFFOR, an independent community-relations agency based in Handsworth, Birmingham
- 1974-76 Director of AFFOR
- 1976-77 Community Worker for Handsworth Law Centre
- 1977-78 Co-ordinator of Birmingham Community Transport
- 1978-79 Employed by NACRO as sole worker on a small research project concerned with petty offenders in Winson Green Prison, Birmingham
- 1979-80 Local Director of Threshold housing aid centre for single people, Wandsworth, London
- 1980-81 Community Worker with Handsworth Single Homeless Action Group, working with mainly black young homeless
- 1981-84 Resource Worker with the Immigration Aid Unit
- 1984 Computer Worker, Birmingham Voluntary Service Council
- 1985/86 Working for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) as sole worker on their Local Authorities and Immigration Review Board projects
- 1985/86 Also self-employed as computer/fund-raising consultant
- 1986/87 Organising Secretary of the Charities Information Bureau, Birmingham
- 1987 Immigration caseworker with Tyndallwoods, solicitors

- 1988-90 Assistant to Clare Short, MP for Birmingham Ladywood
- 1990-93 Investigator for the Local Government Ombudsman
- 1993-94 Manager of the Independent Immigration Support Agency
- 1994-2000 Investigator for the Local Government Ombudsman (part-time)
- 1995-96 Software developer for Dorling Kindersley Multimedia (freelance)
- 1996, Software developer for COBUILD, Birmingham University (freelance)
2000
- 2001 Project Development Worker, Immigration and Asylum Resource Project, Birmingham
- 2001-2002 In Bangladesh working with Transparency International Bangladesh
- 2003-2004 Development of People to Projects Bangladesh Web site (part-time)
- 2003-2006 Investigator for the Local Government Ombudsman (part-time)
- 1997-2001 Freelance and voluntary Internet/Web development work for BRAC (Bangladesh), Christian Aid, World Development Movement, Transparency International, Amnesty International, Red Cross, Refugee Week, Oxfam, and many others
- 2001-2006 Freelance project-development and fundraising work for Birmingham Asian Resource Centre, B-MAG/Birmingham Law Centre, National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns, ASIRT, and others
- 2006-2015 Co-ordinator of Hope Projects (formerly part of Birmingham Law Centre, now an independent charitable company)

Publications:

(with John Plummer) [Racist Movements in the West Midlands](#), AFFOR, 1974

Strangled by the Safety Net, on the Supplementary Benefits System in Birmingham, AFFOR, 1975

(with others) **Wednesday's Children**, on under-fives provision in Handsworth/Lozells, Birmingham, Community Relations Commission, 1975; **Youth Provision in Wolverhampton**, Wolverhampton CCR, 1976

Making Them Pay, on the imprisonment of petty offenders, NACRO, 1980

(with Clare Short and others) **Immigration Law Handbook**, Handsworth Law Centre, 1980

Immigration Factsheets 1-5, JCWI/IAU, 1983/4

No Passports to Services, on local authorities and immigration control, JCWI, 1985

An Immigration Watchdog, on need for an immigration review body, JCWI, 1986

Making Sense of English in Computers, Chambers Harrap, 1993

Entries on popular music and jazz in **Cambridge Encyclopedia**, 1994, and **Chambers Biographical Dictionary**, 2000

[Shattered Homelands, Scattered Dreams](#), on asylum-seekers and refugees in Birmingham, BRAP, 2001

Experience and skills:

I have a wide range of experience and skills, both through my employment as described above and through voluntary involvement in a number of projects.

As Director of **AFFOR** in the mid-1970s, I ran a small independently-minded organisation, with a staff of around half a dozen, as an informal advice/casework agency, campaigning on race issues, and helping to establish other projects in the Handsworth area of Birmingham. Whilst at AFFOR I convened and chaired the setting-up committee of **Handsworth Law Centre**, and then became one of the Centre's first employees.

For ten years I worked as a volunteer adviser with **Trinity Housing Advice Centre**, an independent housing-aid centre in Handsworth, and as a member of its management committee was centrally involved in its development. In 1978, together with Trinity's Senior Housing Adviser, I convened the **Handsworth Single Homeless Action Group**, which worked to provide accommodation for mainly black young single homeless people; I chaired the Group until I moved briefly to London in 1979, and was one of its two full-time employees in 1980-81.

For a number of years in the '70s and '80s, and again recently, I have worked as a volunteer with the [Asian Resource Centre](#) in Birmingham, in immigration casework and as a fundraiser. In 2001 I worked as Project Development Worker for the Centre's **Immigration and Asylum Resource Project** (later [ASIRT](#)).

I initiated Handsworth Law Centre's sponsorship of an **Immigration Aid Unit** serving the West Midlands, undertook fund-raising for the project, and worked there as a Resource Worker between 1981 and 1984. I was also the first chairperson of the **Aekta Clothing Workers Project**, again set up under the aegis of Handsworth Law Centre.

In 1985 and 1986 I worked for the [Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants](#) to produce two reports, one on local authorities' policies and practices in relation to people's immigration status, and the other on the need for an independent review body to monitor British immigration control. In 1986 I initiated the establishment of a West Midlands branch of JCWI, and carried out fund-raising for the branch. In 1990 I initiated the formation of the **Birmingham Black Oral**

History Project, and recently I have worked with others to make material collected by the project available on the [BBOHP Web site](#).

During 1986/87 I assisted **Clare Short MP** with constituency casework on a voluntary basis, and I accompanied her on trips to Pakistan and Bangladesh to visit families refused entry to join men settled in this country. In 1988-90 I was employed as Clare's constituency assistant, and I worked again for her in 2002-3.

From 1990 to 2000 (part-time from 1994), and again part-time from 2003 to 2006, I worked as an Investigator for the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

In 1993/94 I was Manager of the **Independent Immigration Support Agency** in Birmingham. I continue to be involved with nearly all the local independent immigration and asylum projects. I worked with [Birmingham Law Centre](#) to develop and fund-raise for the **Hope Destitution Fund** and **Hope Housing**, and I was employed between 2006 and November 2015 as Co-ordinator of the [Hope Projects](#), now an independent Charitable company working with asylum-seekers and refugees in the West Midlands;

I have IT skills, particularly in **Internet/Web development work**, and **programming** in Perl (including CGI applications), Visual C++, assembly language, PHP and MySQL, Java, and Javascript.

I have in the past used these skills in work, paid and voluntary, for a number of international, national and local voluntary organisations, including BRAC (Bangladesh), Christian Aid, Global Gang, the World Development Movement, Transparency International HQ and TI Chapters in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and the UK, the Red Cross, Landmine Action, Amnesty International, the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns and Oxfam.

For some of my current Web sites, see <http://www.geoffwilkins.net/sites.htm>

References:

References may be taken up from the following:

Shari Brown, Chair, Hope Projects
Restore
St George's Community Hub
Great Hampton Row
Birmingham B17 9PT
tel. 0121-236-0069

email info@restore-uk.org

Clare Short

email shortclare@gmail.com

and you are also welcome to contact any of the organisations mentioned above.

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