



A word from the Chair

When Hannibal wanted to cross the Alps by elephant his generals told him it was simply not possible. His response? "I'll either find a way or make one!"

As it turns out he did find a way and after he crossed the Alps into Italy he had three of his most famous and dramatic victories -- Trebbia, Trasimene, and Cannae.

Some points we can take from Hannibal's attitude are, just because something seems difficult (even impossible) it doesn't mean we shouldn't attempt it. Also some of our greatest victories are born of our greatest challenges.

I make these points because most of us are facing some or our greatest challenges to date and In view of the many new challenges the BME Network is looking at ways to help its member organisations and partner organisations to find a way or make a way forward. It may well mean that the SBMEN itself has to change shape, and/or widen its field of vision, but we are confident that we can adapt to the new social and economic climate and emerge from these trying times a stronger network that is even more valuable to the various statutory agencies in Sunderland, the BME community and Sunderland as a whole.

It is noteworthy that even though Hannibal's generals thought it impossible to cross the Alps with elephants they still gave him their wholehearted support and it was this support that made the whole venture possible. In like manner, we are confident of the support of our stakeholders and we in turn fully intend to support our stakeholders as they strive to adapt to the new landscape, just don't ask us to clean up after the elephants...

Perry Vincent (NERS)

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The future of the Network

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Prevent – the next step

Last year, the Network worked with Sunderland City Council on "Learning to Prevent in Sunderland". Since then the Network has continued to work with Diversity and Inclusion Team to find ways of taking the recommendations of the report forward.

Although this work has continued, the participants haven't a good chance to pick up on the issues. The report also raised issues about responses to other forms of extremism. There will be a meeting at the end of March or early in April to look at everything that came out of the report and to agree some basic things that can be done to make sure that Sunderland stays safe from all types of extremism.

Please contact the Network if you want a copy of the report or if you have firm views on what we should be doing to build strong communities in Sunderland.

News from our members

ICOS

Meet your neighbour

ICOS together with Tyne and Wear Museums kindly invite you to attend the Meet Your Neighbour Exhibition. Come to experience the culture of Polish people living in the region, their thoughts and lives. The exhibition started on Tuesday the 18th of January in Winter Garden Museum, and will last until 25th of February. The entry is free.

We also invite you for the Taster Polish classes on 12th February between 12pm and 2pm in Sunderland Library.

International Community Organisation of Sunderland offers guidance and training courses to the ethnic minority and migrant communities in Sunderland and the North East. In doing so we improve the quality of life of those communities. We also organise social and art events to promote new talents from the ethnic minority community and enhance social cohesion.

Training the Trainers



PTLLS training at Sunderland Bangladeshi Community centre

Sunderland BME Network has coordinated the delivery of a Preparing to Teach in Lifelong Learning Sector [PTLLS] Training course in Tyne & Wear. With support from the Federation for Community Development Learning's Improving Reach Programme, eighteen people from different marginalised groups in the sub-region have the chance to gain the new adult teaching qualification. The programme was delivered by an independent consultant recruited by the FCDL, Sonia Thompson. There have also been PTLLS courses in Manchester and Sheffield, but the one in Tyne & Wear was the biggest, by far.

UCA

Meet and Eat -

Watch this space for some exciting news from UCA

Computer Classes

United Community Action are providing free computer classes at Bangladeshi community centre

EVERY WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY

1pmPM – 4pmPM

The course will teach you:

- **Basic computer use**
- **About the different programmes**
- **Useful software's**
- **Internet surfing**
- **Email**
- **Advanced computer techniques**

The classes will be tailored to suit your personal needs and ability.

ESOL Classes

English language classes (ESOL)
Monday and Tuesday

1pm-4pm

At Bangladeshi Community Centre.

Community Clothing Store

United Community Action have joined together with St. Cuthbert's Care and have started a clothing store at the Drop-In centre, which provides people and families in need with clothes free of charge. We have converted one of our rooms into a clothing store so that people can come and look through the garments to see if there is anything suitable.

For more information on any of the UCA projects please contact Sarah Ahmadi on: 07865646667

English classes and Guidance centre at ICOS!

International Community Organisation of Sunderland kindly invites you for our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. Our lessons take place **every Friday between 6pm and 8pm**.

We offer free materials. We are currently running two levels – **Intermediate** and **Beginners** and we have got a team of dedicated teachers. There is a small fee for the lessons - **£5 per person per month**.

We have also got a drop – in guidance centre

Offering guidance in areas of employment (CVs, covering letters in English as well a job search), employment relations (employment regulations and welfare/access to benefits. Our guidance centre is free of charge and open on **Fridays between 4pm and 7pm**. We are a part of Sunderland BME Network , Sunderland CVS and the Community Foundation.

Our address is:

ICOS
24-26 Norfolk Street
Argent Business Centre
Sunniside
Sunderland
SR1 1EE

Call for help – volunteers needed

Coming to a foreign country to work is demanding, and is often a difficult decision to make, but there is always hope that your situation, especially the financial one, will improve. Coming from less advantaged countries we also assume that our rights at work (both written and cultural) will be respected, especially in a country with such strong and long-standing traditions of democracy and trade unionism.

However, there is both scientific and anecdotal evidence that this is not always the case. Hotels, restaurants and the hospitality industry seem to be part of the problem even more than other sectors.

International Community Organization of Sunderland (ICOS) - in cooperation with the Northern Trades Union Congress (TUC) - is asking you to take part in our project. We would like to find volunteers who have worked in the hospitality industry in the UK.

If you:

- Want to help others and share experience.
- Take part in the research project.
- Know people who have been abused in a workplace or you have been abused yourself
- Want to gain valuable experience and contacts

Please contact ICOS : michal.chantkowski@icos.org.uk

Sangini WNF EAP

“I Dreamed a Dream...It’s Time to Make it True!!!” was the title of a workshop organised by Sangini at the Bangladeshi Centre in December 2010 as part of the BME Employment Access Project. The event aimed to explore the obstacles that BME women wanting to access training or work face and what can be done to help remove these barriers. The event was attended by sixteen women from a wide variety of backgrounds including the south Asian community, eastern Europe and Africa. A relaxed atmosphere was created by artist Josephine Taggart who led the women in an art activity before they went on to hear the inspiring stories of three BME women who had progressed their careers despite facing challenges at home and language barriers. The women then shared their own experiences in group discussion. Four advice agencies were present at the event and the women had a chance to network and gather information about their services over lunch.

Sangini is now carrying out further research into the barriers BME women face by consulting more widely with women and agencies.

Shakti



Shakti means power and is a synonym for woman in Hindi.



The Shakti project has aimed to provide support for and raise awareness of domestic violence by engaging women from the BME community and others with disadvantaged backgrounds in creative activity that will explore their own views and experiences of these issues. Feedback from the women has shown that they have viewed the sessions as art therapy and have benefited from being able to tell and reflect upon their experiences. Within the refuges especially participation has built cohesion between group members and developed a potential source of peer support. The project has highlighted the value of this kind of activity, perhaps especially for women from the BME community where many individuals are socially isolated and unable to access sources of support.



Working with artist Josephine Taggart women have taken part in a group activity where they have produced life boxes that reflect their own experiences, tell stories of endurance and survival, and give messages to others about domestic violence. The groups involved in producing the life boxes have included women from refuges run by Wearside Women in Need, a group from MIND and members of the local south Asian community. The activities have also been supported by listeners from Bridge and MIND. Most women have also kept journals whilst participating in the sessions. The boxes have resulted in a powerful portrayal of the women’s own experiences with objects such as clocks and money being used to express the ways that their partner and other family members exerted control over them. In one box two masks have been used to express the transformation in a woman’s life, and in others there is powerful use of text. The women who have taken part have been from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds including Asian, African, Chinese and traveller women. Some participants also took part in glass printmaking workshops led by Theresa Easton at the National Glass Centre leading to the glasswork, screen printing and boxes were displayed at that site alongside the comments of some group members during the autumn.

The life boxes have been on view at the Sunderland Winter Gardens during December and January 2011, and it is planned that they will be displayed at the Bridge Centre in Columbia in the week before International Women's Day.

The creative writing element of Shakti is being led by Manchester based poet Shamshad Khan. Drama sessions are being led by Nazli Tabatabai Khatambakhsh from the Zende theatre group. Together they have been delivering workshops where women are encouraged to share their stories through



writing which will become integral to creating a short theatre piece based on what has been written. It is planned that this will be performed as part of International Women's Day celebrations on **19th March at the Royalty Theatre**. Nazli and Shamshad have been working on this at a WWIN refuge and with a group of mothers and grandmothers from the local Pennywell community.

Shakti is a pilot project that will build Sangini's own capacity to respond to the needs of women whose lives are affected by violence. Both trustees and workers have undertaken awareness raising and training around domestic violence issues and the lessons learned and experience gained from the project will be used to shape Sangini's future services.

The Shakti Project is supported with funding from the Northern Rock Foundation, Arts Council, Sherburn Trust, and Hadrian Trust.

Young Asian Voices Interact

Rotary International has just set up another Interact group in partnership with Sunderland's Young Asian Voices. Interact (short for International Action) gives young people a way of taking part in local and international activity. This helps to strengthen the Rotary Club for the future and gives young people a way of networking locally, nationally and internationally.

The Interact Club of Sunderland was launched on Wednesday, 2nd February at the Sir Tom Cowie Centre in Thornhill School. Taking part in the evening were the District Governor Elect for Rotary District 1030, Tony Wortman. He is also the President of the Seaburn Rotary Club who are the club's sponsors. District 1030 Youth Opportunities and Interact Chairman PDG, David Conway, also made the trip from Berwick on Tweed to show his support for the good work being done in Sunderland.

Hussain Meah is the President of the Interact Club of Sunderland and made his first public speech after accepting his chain of office from Tony Wortman.

The club has already grown from 16 to 19 members in its first few weeks.

Globally, there are one and a quarter million Rotary Club members and 300,000 young people in 1,200 Interact clubs.



WNF EAP

The BME Employment Access Project has now been running for approximately 10 months. The Project aims to address the low levels of engagement of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in employment and employment services by working within those communities to encourage participation and build confidence in core services provision. It has attracted local interest throughout Sunderland enabling the Project to achieve the initial performance output targets set by the Working Neighbourhood Fund. This has led to the Project increasing its output targets.

The success comes from the personalised service provided to the individual customers, addressing the needs and requirements in innovative manners for example using the Internet to translate a customer's CV into English! The relationship between the team and the customers has been greatly appreciated often leading on to the Outreach Workers becoming a one stop service point. The Project has also managed to provide various workshops delivered by NHS and HMRC: empowering a customer's journey towards employment.

A vital factor of the Project's achievements and customer's progress has been the training session provided by three member Organisations of the Sunderland BME Network. These are Jambo Africa, Sunderland Bangladeshi Community Centre and Young Asian Voices. The training sessions have been very beneficial and feedback has been positive in terms of boosting confidence and enhancing skills. A fourth member Organisation, Sangini, hosted an interactive workshop on behalf of the Project focused on BME women and barriers into employment. A report on their work will be available shortly.

It is sad to note that the BME Employment Access Project is coming to an end by March 2011. This has been received with surprise by the Local community and the Project's customers, who acknowledge the service being provided and are mindful of the real and clearly evidenced need to address BME employment issues. The Project is at present gradually preparing to close and the Sunderland BME Network is looking into funding sources to continue the work.

Abu Khaled

Introduction to Campaign Strategy and Planning: Friday 18th February, 2011, City Library, Fawcett Street

The Sheila McKechnie Foundation, a charity established in the name of the former campaigner and chief executive of Shelter and the Consumer Association, ran a training day on how to campaign effectively. The course is one of a series of days being run around the country. Iffat Shahnaz and Clare Parry from the Foundation drew upon the knowledge and experience of Mark Denton (Political Correspondent, BBC North East and Cumbria) and former Sunderland MP, Chris Mullin. If you are interested in finding out more about the campaign planning process please contact the office.

More information is also available from www.smk.org.uk and www.campaigncentral.org.uk.

SCAMS ARE SMART. PROVE YOU'RE SMARTER. BIN THEM!

1-28 FEBRUARY 2011
SCAMNESTY
DON'T LET THEM CON YOU

Bring any scam letters received throughout February to the Day Centre so that we can bin them in our scamnesty box. Age UK Sunderland is working with Sunderland City Council's Trading Standards Service to encourage people to report scams. They can also be placed in the scamnesty boxes at:

- Civic Centre Main Reception, Burdon Road, Sunderland;
- Age UK Sunderland, Bradbury Centre, Stockton Road, Sunderland;
- Gentoo's shop in Fawcett Street, Sunderland;
- Washington Customer Service Centre Library at the Galleries;
- Bunny Hill Customer Service Centre Library, and
- The Hetton Centre Library.

Scam emails can be reported by forwarding them to:
www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/reportascam

The letters and emails will then be forwarded to the National Fraud Authority and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau and they will review and analyse the material to determine whether preventative measures can be taken against the scammers, or if they can be stopped from operating.

Whether it's an advance fee request to access some money, a deceptive prize draw, a bogus lottery, a miracle health cure, or a career opportunity, don't be conned – bin it.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Pass on the warning; tell your friends and family if you discover a scam. Your actions may help protect others from becoming a scam victim.

- Never be rushed into replying to an exciting or urgent offer. Speak to a relative friend or neighbour before sending any money
- Never send money to anyone who says you've won the lottery or a big prize.
- Never give your bank account details or other information to people you don't know

For more information visit www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/scamnesty or contact trading standards on 0191 561 1709.



Grassroots Grants

Over one thousand groups have been supported by the Grassroots Grants Programme that is now coming to an end. Over the last three years in the sub-region a total of £2,059,357 was given to small groups. The programme was managed by the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland under contract to the Community Development Foundation. The last grant awards were made in December, as all money has to be spent by 31st March, 2011.

Grants of up to £5,000 were given to groups that would normally not have access to small pots of money. In the Sunderland, 197 groups received an average of £2,189. Eighteen black and minority ethnic groups were successful in gaining support. The initial monitoring shows that groups have made good use of the funds and that a number of groups that are new to funding have also been supported. Even though the programme has ended, thanks to the Grassroots Grants endowment match challenge the government provided £1 for every £1 raised locally by the Community Foundation to ensure that small groups continue to receive support. This is now part of the foundation's portfolio of funds so applications can be made in the normal way through the standard Community Foundation process. For more information see

www.communityfoundation.org.uk

Remembrance Day Parade 2010

SBMEN were, once again, strongly represented by members at the Remembrance Day Parade in Sunderland. Members of the city's Sikh, Muslim, Polish, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi and Indian communities took part in remembering the sacrifices that have been, and still are being made.

Heritage Lottery Fund

Ellen Creighton (Development Officer with the Heritage Lottery Fund) met up with a few Network members to talk about HLF's drive to get more funding applications from black and minority ethnic organisations. There are a range of funding programmes available, including one for projects working with and led by young people. Project proposals need to be around heritage. The Network has agreed to set up a developmental meeting within the next few months. Members can bring project ideas along and check their eligibility and get help with making them stronger.

BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC FORCES MEMORIAL PROJECT

What we're doing

Sunderland BME Network Ltd is trying to make contact with black and minority ethnic Sunderland residents who have been members of Britain's Armed Forces.

Why?

The Ministry of Defence has prepared an exhibition called 'We Were There' which looked at the ethnic minority presence in Britain's armed forces over the last 250 years.

- We would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Sunderland's ethnic minorities.
- We would like to write the information we gather into booklet that can be sent to local schools and colleges.

What you should do

If you've been the armed forces, or know someone who has, please contact Dean T Huggins on 0191 565 7315; or write to

Sunderland BME Network Ltd
Unit 31
Stanfield Business Centre
Addison Street
Sunderland
SR2 8SZ

We would also be interested in talking to anyone who was part of the armed forces of another country.

This project is supported by funds from the Vaux Foundation at the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland

Obituary

Freda Din

The Network is sorry to report the passing on January 9th 2011 of Freda Din.

Freda had vast experience of community development work and worked in this field for over 20 years. After working with the initial Steering Group of the Sunderland Bangladeshi Community Centre in 1998, she raised the funds for the development and build of the Centre in 2000. She managed the building and continued to develop the centre and its activities. She has received and managed funds from ERDF, SRB, Big Lottery Fund, Home Office, Northern Rock Foundation, Lloyds TSB and many service level agreements with the local authority. For the last 3 years Freda has been developing projects which address the needs of the BME communities.

She will be sadly missed as a manager, colleague and friend.

A memorial event will be held shortly. Further details to follow

How to join

To become a member of the Network or for more details about the work that we do contact

Dean T Huggins

Development Officer or

Gill Laverick

Acting Network Administrator

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