

Community Development Programme




**Annual Review
2004 - 2005**

"Great oaks from little acorns grow."

Dudley Racial Equality Council



"Committed to Making a Difference"



Annual Review
1 December 2004 - 30 November 2005

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Dudley Racial Equality Council

Dudley Racial Equality Council is committed to a programme of equality of opportunity, community development and empowerment through pro-active means and so helps to enrich the life-experiences of disadvantaged and discriminated communities.

Mission Statement

To work in partnership with a wide range of organisations and individuals towards a just society which values racial and religious diversity, in which everyone has equal opportunities to live, learn and work free from the fear of racial discrimination, prejudice, racial harassment and violence.

Vision Statement

We aim to achieve justice for all individuals regardless of their race, colour, religion, disability, or gender, so that all members of our communities can enjoy the benefit of a just society.

Objectives of the Community Development Programme

The Community Development Programme aims to tackle social exclusion and community cohesion by enhancing the ability of BME communities in the Borough of Dudley. By providing a range of capacity building programmes to the BME community sector, it will enable groups to engage and develop projects and ideas that will contribute to the economic and social regeneration of the area.

The Community Resource Centre is central to the project, providing a range of services such as information and advice, equipment for community use, training, computer access, photocopying and access to meeting rooms.

Further funding from The Big Lottery during 2004 has enabled the programme to enter its second stage. During this phase the Programme seeks to build on the previous project's successes since 2001 but with a particular emphasis on capacity building.

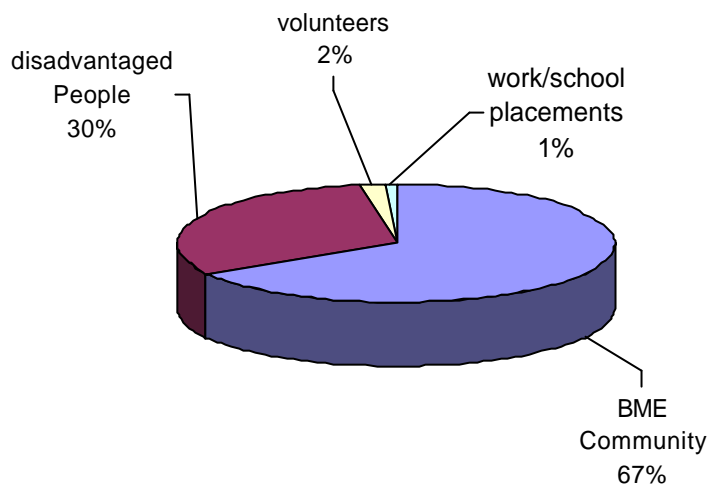
The overall objectives of the Community Development Programme is to:

- ensure a visible development of BME voluntary/community sector.
- provide an avenue for partnerships with other organisations for holistic delivery of services across the Dudley Borough.
- formulate a forum for members of BME communities to freely express themselves.
- manage the Community Resource Centre ensuring it provides a free range of services not available elsewhere in or around the town centre.

Since the start of this grant year, the project has provided a range of services to 280 members of the Black and minority ethnic community and 58 voluntary and community groups.

The people which the programme has benefited during the year is illustrated in the pie-chart below:

Black and minority ethnic community	187
Disadvantaged people	85
Volunteer	6
Work/school placements	2



This report gives a review of the work that has been done and the impact it has had on the BME community in Dudley.



Selection of users of the Community Resource Centre following a presentation attended by the Mayor of Dudley, Cllr Ian Kettle.

Supporting BME Community & Voluntary Groups

This year we have worked intensively with seven BME organisations in developing their capacity, governance and seeking appropriate grants for the sustainability of their services. Detailed below are the types of support we have given to the different groups.

(i) Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association

The organisation was successful in acquiring funding for 3 years from the Big Lottery Fund, in order to develop their organisational activities further. Assistance was given with the management of their projects such as the development of an action plan to take the project forward, formulating policies and procedures, monitoring of activities, putting together financial procedures and providing line management support to the project officer.

The Association is now geared towards having better internal structures and are more confident in working with the wider community. There is also a better management of resources and sustainability of the group.

(ii) Halesowen Asian Elders Group

This group is going from strength to strength after having supported them in acquiring charity status a few years ago. The group which is run by elderly people receives clerical support on a weekly basis. This has enabled them to produce flyers to promote their activities and services wider afield, hold meetings which are minuted and therefore action can be followed up and provide assistance in the compiling of information for two funding applications which resulted in successful bids for £1,550. During the spring and summer, we assisted the group in

arranging two community events which celebrated special religious events.

Through advice given by the community development programme they now have a better governing body and working relationships have improved both internally and externally ie. group members, funders and other partner agencies.

(iii) Bengali Mosque and Community Centre

We were pleased to have been able to engage with the Bangladeshi community as previous years had not been so successful. Through partnership working we were able to obtain funding which helped the group to launch a summer playscheme and celebration event. This helped to bring about community awareness of the Bangladeshi community which was not widely known and also provided an opportunity for both the young and older people to work together. Several meetings has been held to advise the group on constitutional issues within their organisation.



Bengali Mosque Chairman, Mr Jumshor Ullah, addressing the audience at the Bangladeshi Community event.

(iv) New Testament Welfare Association

The strengthened infrastructure of the organisation has been the result of the continuing support given to them through the

programme. With the weekly clerical assistance received, they have been able to host two community events which attracted the attention of a number of external agencies who had no involvement. Through the provision of training for their members, they have a team who are better skilled and more informed of what is available to their organisation. Three staff members have been recruited which will help them to take their services further and develop processes for being sustainable. We are currently assisting them in putting together a proposal for the refurbishment of their building which if successful will enable them to undertake further community activities.

(v) Dudley Black Carers Group

One of the key areas of support given to this group has been in the development of the skills of eight members. The members had not received any formal health & safety training and after the facilitation of a session for them they are better trained and more confident in undertaking their duties. As a small group there are many areas that need to be addressed in terms of their development. In order to strengthen the group guidance has been given to them as to other support services that are available to them locally.

(vi) OSCAR Dudley

This has now become a well known organisation in the community which has been a result of varying support they have received from the programme. Much of the work is carried out by volunteers and we were able to provide an additional volunteer with skills in marketing to assist them in the development of their service. Through the clerical assistance given by DREC's Community Support Worker, a Carer's event was organised in March 2005 which helped the organisation to promote their services. Recently, the organisation has been looking at their strategic position and future

development. This enabled us to put together a training package for 5 members of their management committee which looked at business planning.

(vii) Greenlight Project

This new group is run by predominantly young Asian people and has the potential to be a good role models for the youth in their community. We had the opportunity to work with them in laying foundations such as setting up the group, where to access funding and what activities they would like to undertake and how best to go forward with these ideas. By liaising with other support agencies, we were able to access an avenue for them to promote themselves using Radio Ramadan. The group members feel confident knowing support is available and are working together in order to develop their project.

• Capacity Building Training Programme

Capacity building is one of the key outputs of the programme. After discussion with community groups and knowledge acquired from the first programme we were able to construct a programme of training specifically according to the group's needs.

In summary, thirty-one management committee members received training in Business Planning; Roles and Responsibilities and Recruitment.

These training sessions have enabled the groups to have a better trained management committee, who have used what they have learnt to obtain more knowledge about the BME sector and consequently are able to aid in its development. There has also been an improvement in the organisational processes which are gradually becoming better structured and maintained. The recruitment training sessions has helped in them the recruitment of people who will bring particular skills and attributes to the organisation.

In addition to these identified areas, three thematic workshops were held, dealing with organisational issues with the aim of improving organisational effectiveness. The workshops were on Roles & Responsibilities for Committee Members, Quality Awareness and Accessing Funding. A total of twelve BME organisations benefited from these sessions.

Although more training was planned, findings from the Organisational Healthcheck conducted earlier in the year, and discussions with community groups, identified a need for more specialised training courses rather than 'off the shelf' packages. The main areas were in:

- (i) Leadership and Management Development
- (ii) Organisational Development
- (iii) Service Development
- (iv) Funding
- (v) Community Engagement

In our research BME groups have informed us that they prefer to attend training sessions that took account of linguistic needs. Groups also believe it to be important that trainers not only had an understanding of BME organisation, but also experience of working within the sector.

One of the priorities for the next year of the

programme will be to implement these sessions to at least fifty management committee members.

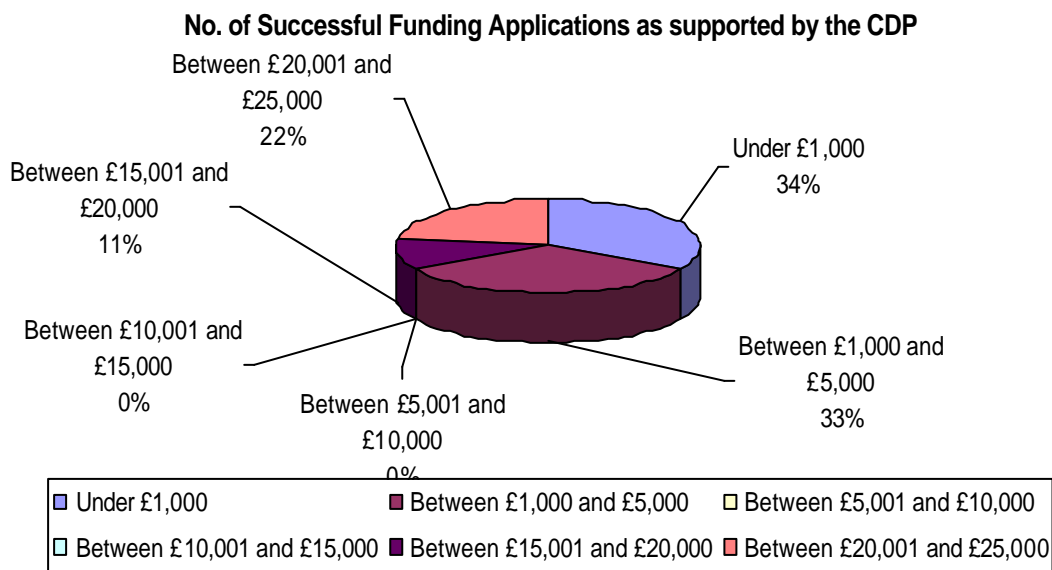
• Funding of BME Community Groups

Issues around funding is always one of the key points raised by virtually all BME groups that are supported by the programme.

Our development work identified the following areas of difficulty in funding for the BME sector:

- The need to identify new innovation projects to access funding
- Unable to attract funding to contribute to the core organisational costs
- Competing against more resourced and established organisations in the voluntary sector
- Completing applications in time to meet short deadlines
- Lack of information and advice about grants available
- Funding is often short term which impacts on the inability to develop services

In order to deal with these issues, we undertook thirty advice sessions to advise and support groups in knowing where to go for funding and how to put together a funding application. From these sessions 10 BME groups have benefited. This further



resulted in the formulating of a consortium bid, and the hosting of a Grant Finder workshop. Overall, we have been able to support 9 BME groups with successfully securing funding to the value of £70k.

Organisational Healthcheck

Research suggests that compared to the mainstream sector, black and minority ethnic organisations lack capacity (people; finance; influence). Many have been established for many years, and the sector is more concentrated in areas of deprivation. In the Dudley Borough many of the BME organisations are faith based groups.

One of the programme's objectives is to provide a range of capacity building support to the sector in order to enable groups to engage and develop projects and ideas that will contribute to the economic and social regeneration of the area.

One of the main pieces of work has been the undertaking of an organisational 'healthcheck' of 70 BME organisations and groups. Although the response was below what we had hoped, it identified gaps in the needs of BME organisations such as funding, infrastructure support and capacity building which we feel are most common to the BME voluntary sector.

Based on responses to the questionnaire, the main areas of support and development identified were:

1. Funding (71%)
2. Training for Committee Members (48%)
3. Capacity Training (48%)
4. Project Management (43%)
5. Marketing of Organisation (43%)
6. Acquiring a building/place to meet (38%)
7. Governance (33%)
8. Administrative support (29%)

The Community Development Programme will be working with BME organisations in order to address these gaps and use the data accumulated to make recommendations for ourselves and other partners for the future years of the programme.

This year we have endeavoured to get the sector working together in order to strengthen it and build confidence. One area this has been tried is in the area of attracting funding for the groups. A consortium bid involving 10 BME organisations was put together. The bid was put forward to help strengthen the groups' organisational capabilities to enable them to sustain themselves in order to play a fuller part in civil society and community cohesion, and engage more effectively with public authorities. The result of this will not be available until next year.

Moreover, we have continued to support organisations on an individual basis in acquiring funds and additional resources. Funding advice and support has been given to 9 organisations, resulting in 6 successful bids.

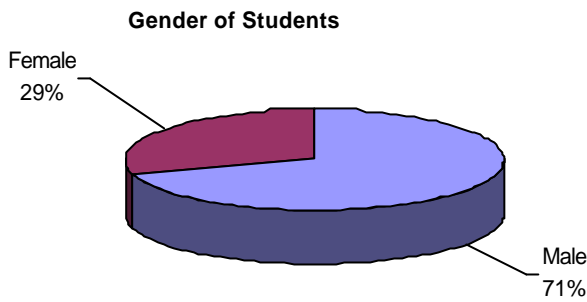
In addition, our support and advice has ensured that three organisations, namely Dudley Yemeni Community, Association, New Testament Welfare Association and OSCAR Dudley, have continued to maintain their service level agreements with the local authority.

Often, the sector has not been as well informed of plans or information taking place within the Dudley Borough but through our representation at cross-cutting events with partners ie. Fair Share Group, DOSTI, we have been able to cascade information down to the BME organisations making them better aware of what is happening in the sector. This has led to organisations making informed choices and have the ability to be involved in local decision making.

Partnership Working

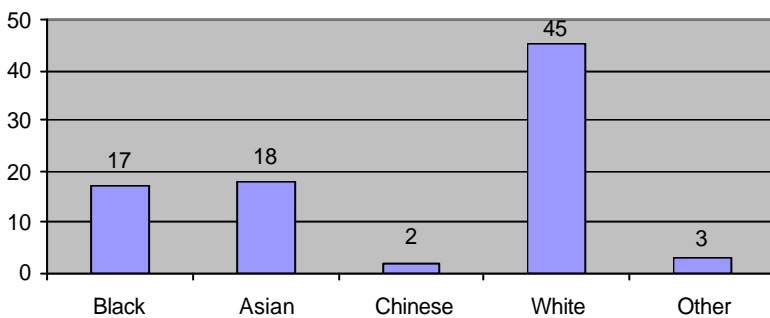
Since the Community Development Programme's initial set-up, Dudley College has worked jointly with us in the facilitating of UK Online which is resident within the Community Resource Centre. Despite local competition, the numbers using this facility has continued to be consistent.

In total eighty-five people enrolled on a computer course. The charts below show the student's gender and ethnicity.



Currently, of those enrolled, six students have gained their first qualification in computing. The other students are working towards completion of the course. To celebrate this achievement, the six students along with those gaining certificates through UK Online were recognised at an awards event in which the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Ian Kettle, presented them with their certificates.

Ethnicity of Students

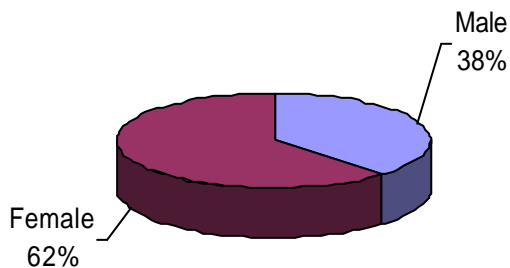


For one particular student aged 77, this had given her a great sense of achievement as she never even switched on a computer prior to attending the class, let alone complete a course. For other students it built their confidence and also enhanced their job prospects.

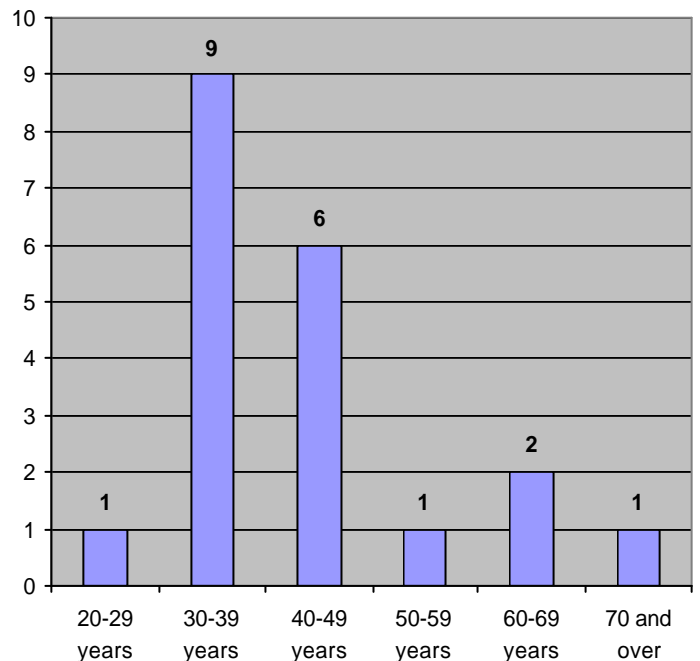
To support the work of UK Online, we have been using the services of a I.T tutor to undertake one-to-one tuition for members of the community who have no or very little skills in the use of a computer. Twenty-one enrolled on these introductory courses as follows:

Other organisations we have worked with during the year has been the Dudley Council of Voluntary Service and PACE. Meetings were held to look at the infrastructure support to BME organisations and to

Gender of Students



Age Range of Students



see how they could be better supported. From this an event looking at having quality systems was organised in Lye.

In line with the government initiative, ChangeUp, we are actively working with a consortium made up of four African Caribbean groups to look at ways to improve voluntary and community sector infrastructure.

ChangeUp aims to ensure that by 2014 frontline voluntary community organisations will have the support they need to achieve their potential, that this support is available nationwide, that its effective, accessible, and reflects and promotes diversity and is sustainably funded.

We have participated in three meetings to seek how we can take forward the aims of the group. It is hoped that through the work of the group that African Caribbean groups will recognise their own strategic position and influence and that more partnerships will be established.

• **Volunteers**

The value that volunteers bring to the work of the project has always been a key aspect in it achieving its objectives. The Community Development Programme seeks to develop opportunities for volunteers in undertaking meaningful roles which will be of real value to the volunteer, organisation and community.

Once enrolled onto the programme, volunteers are supported in carrying out their roles through induction, supervision, training, and career development.

Since becoming a volunteer with the Community Development Programme, Hari Aujla has never looked back. It was whilst working with Pricewaterhouse Coopers as a tax consultant, that Hari felt he wanted to do community work. This desire lead him to reduce his working hours so he could commit one day each week to do voluntary work.

Hari joined the REC in March 2005, and gained sufficient experience and knowledge for him to take up employment with the West Midlands Fire Service as a Community Advocate. As a volunteer Hari attended meetings and conferences, wrote letters on behalf of service users, accessed training to aid his development and took part in staff social events.



Volunteer - Hari Aujla

We would like not only to thank Hari for all his hard work during the year but also the following volunteers who have supported Officers in the work of the programme:

Elaine Wilson
Fakhra Janjua
Sabina Kauser

Robina Akhtar
Roderick Lattery

Utilising the skills of volunteers to support the programme

The grant given to us from the Big Lottery Fund has allowed us to get more volunteers involved in the work both within the 'four walls' of the office and also in the community.

One such case where this has worked well is with OSCAR Dudley, who are based in Kate's Hill. OSCAR Dudley is the Organisation for Sickle Cell Anaemia Research and Thalassaemia Support.

The programme has worked with the organisation for 5 years supporting them in the development of their service, the training of the management committee and clerical support. During the year we were able to provide them with a volunteer who has used his skills in marketing to produce professional marketing materials and also help with organising conference. This has helped them to promote the organisation and bring more awareness about the service they provide.

Roderick Lattery enjoys the work he has been doing with OSCAR Dudley and feels that he is making a valuable contribution to the African Caribbean community because no other organisation offers the support and advice which is necessary. Although he is a volunteer, he feels valued and never feels undermined because of the position he holds and is happy to carry on volunteering for as long as he is needed.

The services provided by the programme could not have been as effective as they are if it were not for the supporting role of its volunteers. They are a

valuable resource and we recognise and appreciate the work of all our volunteers whether they work at 'home' or 'away'.

• Achievements 2004/2005

At the start of the project year, the following objectives were set:

- (i) To provide a range of capacity building support to the black voluntary/community sector.
- (ii) To provide a 'One-Stop Shop' delivering relevant services, advice and support, by being seen as a focus and hub for locally based BME communities and voluntary sector/community groups.

In order to achieve these objectives, a number of activities were undertaken. The following table details the planned activities and achievements in each of the areas.

Activity	Target	Achievement	Difference
Provide services within the remit of the Community Development Programme:			
(i) provision of ICT facilities to members of the community	100	106	+6
(ii) organise workshops, seminars and conferences	1	3	+2
Develop a capacity building programme:			
(i) carry out an organisational 'health check'	1	1	0
(ii) discussion with community groups	21	47	+26
(iii) develop training programmes for staff and volunteers	2	2	0
Provide volunteering and placement opportunities for individuals from the local communities to support project staff.	4	8	+4
Support community groups in acquiring funds and additional resources:			
(i) number of groups advised	8	9	+1
(ii) number of applications supported	8	7	-1
(iii) number of applications successful	5	6	+1
Provide extensive outreach support to both individuals and organisations:			
(i) provision of administrative support	6	4	-2

Activity	Target	Achievement	Difference
Undertake development of BME Voluntary/Community Sector Report:			
(i) carry out environmental scanning and needs analysis	1	0	-1
Promote partnership working at a community level in support of community cohesion:			
(i) number of meetings with BME consortiums	2	4	+2
(ii) develop consortium funding bids	2	2	0
Develop robust monitoring and evaluation probes with an emphasis on quality, customer/client and stakeholder:			
(i) undertake a client satisfaction survey	1	1	0
(ii) hold a Users Forum	2	0	-2
(iii) hold a Community Affairs Forum	4	1	-3
(iv) undertake evaluation of project	1	0	-1
Promote the services and activities of the Community Resource Centre by:			
(i) leaflet distribution	1000	1000	0
(ii) newsletter	8000	6000	-2000
(iii) open days	1	0	-1
(iv) community activities	2	4	+2
(v) website	12	0	-12
(vi) local media	10	3	-7
Support community groups in acquiring funds and additional resources to develop their services:			
(i) groups accessing funding software	8	9	+1
(ii) groups accessing information library	6	0	-6
Support community groups in promoting their organisational activities developing a professional approach:			
(i) number of groups assisted	8	5	-3
(ii) number of groups advised	7	3	-4
Promote extensive range of equality materials available for loan:			
(i) number of enquiries received	17	0	-17
(ii) number of materials loaned out	7	0	-7

Customer Satisfaction

In order to determine the value of the organisation's services, it undertook a perception questionnaire. The questionnaire asked for views on the support received from the organisation, its importance and the implications should those services cease. Below is a selection of the comments from users in relation to the Community Development Programme.

"We have close contacts ... We have received full support as a working partner and get information about associations running and grant applications."

"We cannot envisage any organisation giving us advice and support."

"Staff are of great value and supported us in our work and we wouldn't be where we are today."

"The loss of such a valuable partnership with such specialist information would be detrimental to my organisation."

"A great asset to BME groups in Dudley."

"There is no other organisation which can help us in these matters."

• Priorities for 2005/06

The coming year we will continue to develop the capacity building programme using the data already collected from research undertaken and discussions with groups.

In addition to the general support given by the programme, key areas of priority will include:

• Dudley BME Voluntary Sector Report

To develop a realistic picture of the current state of the BME sector in Dudley, an environmental scanning and needs analysis exercise is to be carried out. This information can then be used to identify the provision of services, skills, funding, gaps etc and inform the sector of the support that is available.

• The BME Voluntary Sector Conference

To highlight the important role of the BME voluntary sector in Dudley, we shall be hosting a conference in March which will look at their role and value and make statutory bodies and key agencies aware of the support that is needed and how they can work with the sector to achieve this.

• Training for Beneficiaries

The programme has already revealed its intention to ensure a good programme of capacity building is given to its clientele. To reinforce this, research and consultation with BME groups has already been undertaken and the information collated will be used to devise a programme of training which will give new skills to beneficiaries in addition to developing those already acquired.

• Users Forum

One of the underlying success factors of the community development programme has been its ability to identify the needs of the BME groups and consolidate this into a programme of support. We aim to continue this and will be working closely with the BME groups, giving them an opportunity to shape and develop the programme through a Users Forum.

• Project Evaluation

To assess the continuing need for the programme and the impact of its work, an internal and an external evaluation will be undertaken. The internal evaluation will consist of interviews with client service users, public and mainstream voluntary sector organisations. The external evaluation will focus on areas such as the outcomes of the objectives, usage of services and client satisfaction.

• Marketing of Community Resource Centre

To maximise the use of the services of the Resource Centre there will be planned activities such as; open days, leaflet distribution, use of the local media, and roadshows, throughout the Borough.

The coming year will certainly be a challenge for the Community Development Programme. Especially as more government policies relating to the voluntary and community sector are formulated.

Policies such as the delivery of public services by voluntary organisations means the BME voluntary sector cannot afford to remain complacent but address areas of incapacity.

It is our aim to ensure that the black and minority ethnic community are kept well informed of these decisions and develop the programmes that will adequately prepare the BME sector so that they are not left behind or remaining stagnant but are at the forefront along with the mainstream sector and therefore able to make a significant contribution.

We would like to thank the staff and volunteers who have worked with individuals and groups during the past year and hope 2005/2006 will be equally, if not better, than before.

Staff:

Community Development Officer:	Shabir Hussain
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