

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Newsletter: Issue Two – March 2008



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CEFC News:

Message from the Chair Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum



I would like to thank all those who have provided feedback to issue one of our Newsletter. It gives me immense pleasure to say that it was very well received. This month we will be concentrating on the subject of sharing culture, we will be hosting our first major event on Sunday 30th March 2008 at The Junction. Patricia Crampton co-ordinating the event has managed to secure an excellent programme of entertainment and I am pleased to say that the local communities have strongly rallied around us in order to make the event a real success. CEFC management board are really looking forward to the event with the hope that some of you will join us there. I would also like to give formal recognition to Lorna Davis who has put together a very good plan to reinvigorate our forum.

One of our main projects is the Cambridge Racial Incident Support Project (CRISP). Over the last two years it has dealt with 66 cases of racial discrimination and harassment in Cambridge City and the surrounding rural areas. The cases dealt with include 39 in Cambridge City and 27 in the surrounding rural areas. The casework covered a wide variety of issues. 25 involved employment matters and the remaining cases involved issues around discriminatory services, harassment from neighbours, and issues with the Police and other public bodies. In two cases, sexual harassment and disability discrimination were added to the racial element. The caseworker, George Jones has represented clients at a number of employment disciplinary hearings when permitted by the employer and advised in cases where permission has been refused. He has also attended court hearings to support witnesses through this process. CRISP works closely in partnership with the Police and local councils but will challenge the Police to get them to take action on behalf of clients or to challenge the actions that the Police have taken. One example involved an Asian family living in Cambridge being targeted by a racist youth over a period of several years. The children were being bullied going to and from school and the parents were subject to verbal abuse when he saw them in the street. Eggs and bottles were being thrown at their house and their lives were being seriously blighted by it. The family finally complained to the Police but no action was taken by them until CRISP became involved and caused the Police to act. The youth was arrested and dealt with by the court and the life of the family has changed for the better. I am delighted that George Jones continues to support the CRISP project with a wealth of legal knowledge and experience. For further information, advice or support please contact George Jones at CRISP. Telephone 01223 462615 (Mondays & Thursdays). If he is not around a message can be left for him on the answerphone - or you can email crisp@cecf.co.uk

If you would like to have a mention in our Newsletter for your community project or event please contact us on 01223 315877.



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Community News: Development and Cohesion

Driving forward our goals of **inclusivity, transparency, sensitivity and honesty**.....



Jason Yow and the Chinese Community warmly welcomed CEFC management committee members at the Chinese New Years Celebrations. Netherhall School Hall was packed on February 7th with local community members, local authority officials and friends of the Chinese Community. Those present were entertained by some first class acts that helped to bring the Chinese Culture alive in Cambridge and start the New Year in real style.

We would also like to thank the Cambridge Caribbean Association for their warm welcome to our board members at the Valentine's Dinner and Dance Event on the 16th February at the Cherry Hinton Village, Centre. The steel band were fantastic and the food was delicious.

Valerie Berkson is extremely grateful for the excellent feedback received in relation to issue one and would like your news and information to keep flowing in.

Anil Soni has updated the previous website and is now working to develop it further. If you have any thoughts or ideas that you would like to share to improve our website or if you are skilled at web design and would like to provide some voluntary support please contact the Forum, you are needed.

Patricia Crampton As a result of the January Newsletter a number of partner organisations made contact with the Forum. Patricia has established contact with a wide range of groups and work is in progress to continue to develop better dialogue and understanding with partner organisations and community groups.

PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) is the service dedicated to the hospital's patients and their relatives and carers to provide help, advice, support and information, and to listen to their suggestions and concerns. PALS want to help and provide assistance for everyone including people from minority ethnic groups who may struggle to cope with hospital procedures etc. They can be contacted by telephone 01223 216756 or by e-mail <pals@addenbrookes.nhs.uk>



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Employment and Training

PROMOTING EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS

Networking Lunch - 12.45pm
Wednesday 19th March
Centre at St Paul's, Hills Road, Cambridge

We would like to invite your organisation to participate in a special networking lunch and event on 19th March. This forms part of a programme developed jointly by local equalities organisations who want to build stronger and broader partnership links - to mirror the development of the new integrated Equalities & Human Rights Commission.

Our Equalities & Human Rights Day on 19th March provides an opportunity for organisations to come together to share information about their work. It will include a morning workshop and an afternoon information drop-in session. (Programme attached)

Poetry & Pizza

Our lunchtime networking session will profile the work of local equalities organisations and as it is World Poetry Day on the 21st, we would like to invite organisations to nominate a poem to be read during the event. Each organisation will have two minutes to briefly summarise what they do before their poem is read. Following lunch there will be time for networking and discussion with other organisations during the afternoon.

Poems - should reflect the equalities and human rights issues that your work addresses. They can be published poets or work written by your users or members. You can choose to read the poem yourself - or we will have a reader to read it for you.

A summary of local organisations and their work will go on to a poetry "wall" which we will create during the event. This will also be displayed at the Junction on 30th March as part of the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum Multi-Cultural event - so it will be a good opportunity to promote your organisation and activities.

PLEASE EMAIL TO LET US KNOW WHETHER YOUR ORGANISATION IS ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THIS EVENT.

Email: camcomtrust@aol.com

CAMBRIDGE MENCAP

Individuals aged 16+ with mild to moderate learning difficulties are invited to apply and join courses organised by Cambridge Mencap. Subjects on offer include catering, aerobics, and working in various arts media.

More information and fliers are available at
<www.hrsfc.ac.uk> or contact <anaela@cambridaemencap.co.uk>



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Forthcoming Events

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum - Multi-Cultural Event

Sunday 30th March 2008

This year is the 'European Year of Intercultural dialogue'. In an ever increasing diverse society, the development of intercultural dialogue, by respecting and promoting cultural diversity and engaging in community action that promotes and values the difference will hopefully help to facilitate and reinforce social justice and cohesion.

It is against this backdrop that the **Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum** is inviting you to attend the multi-cultural event involving the diverse communities in Cambridge and the surrounding area by showcasing and profiling their rich cultural heritage through a range of activities.

It promises to be a fun-packed day for all age groups with dance and musical performances, exhibitions, workshops and other activities. We encourage you to come along in your cultural/traditional wear.

Venue: The Junction
Clifton Way
Cambridge
CB1 7GX

Time: 1.00 - 5.00 p.m.

If you are interested in finding out more about the event please contact patricia.crampton@googlemail.com

Akashi Project

This is a early notice about a meeting called '**Beyond Akashi**' (**Beyond the Sky**) at 2:00 p.m. on **Saturday 12th April 2008** at Centre of St Pauls, Hills Road, Cambridge **Free entry - Indian snacks and drinks will be provided**. It would be really great if some of you are able to come along. The meeting is a discussion workshop for key participants of the Akashi Project, to show you **our new poster exhibition (which some of you are featured in!)** and also answer the question of **WHAT NEXT?**

Please book a space in advance - let me know if you can come. Please contact Shilpa on 01223 460475 or email shilpa@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org.

Saturday 19 April, 10:30-5:30, Newnham Croft Primary School Are you concerned about the condition of our world? Would you like to explore your ability to respond? This workshop will introduce The Work That Reconnects, an empowerment approach developed by Joanna Macy (see www.joannamacy.net).

To book please contact Anna McIvor anna.mcivor@gmail.com <<mailto:anna.mcivor@gmail.com>>
or ring 01223 709634.



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Volunteer News

PC Jamal Ali's visit to Bangladesh

Jamal Ali is a serving Police Officer currently based at Sawston Police Station. This is a short piece on how that visit has had a profound impact on him.....

I went to Bangladesh on 16th January 2008 for five weeks to visit my relatives. They live in the northern region of Bangladesh called Sylhet. It was a wonderful visit and whilst there I was invited to a local village primary school that has been government funded since 1973. I went along to the school and found the school building has four rooms with three teachers responsible for teaching one hundred and sixty nine pupils aged between 6- 11 years.

The school actually requires a total of five teachers but the government can't afford to provide the salary for two extra teachers. So the school is left short of two teachers and as a result the education standard of the school is very poor. I was informed by the head teacher that not many pupils from the school do well enough to go to a good college and no one from the school has gone to university to obtain a degree- bearing in mind the school opened in 1973!!!

I felt very touched by this experience and decided to do something positive to help the children at Bosuntopur Primary School. I am planning a fund raising campaign and if you would like to help me in any way please contact me through CEFC.

A volunteers experience in South Africa.

I have worked in the Further Education, Higher education and the Secondary education system in this country (UK) for the last 20 years. I am an Advanced Skills teacher of Mathematics and have worked in teacher training. I wanted to share my expertise and experience with colleagues from a developing country. I chose South Africa, because I fell in love with the place when I visited it during the cricket world cup in 2003. I knew then that I would return someday in a professional capacity as teacher of Mathematics.

After some research on the internet, I found an organisation running a volunteering project, involving teaching at a primary school in Cape Town. I wasted no time booking myself onto it. The project was for a month - ample time for me to get to know their system and make contacts to secure a permanent post for a later date. I spent a second month travelling around Southern Africa; visiting Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. The primary school I worked in was located in District Six, a place which now symbolizes itself for what apartheid did to families and whole communities, due to the forced removal of 60000 inhabitants during the 1970s.

Most children at this school came from the townships located just outside of Cape Town, which meant they would need to wake up at 5.00am to be at school for 7.30am. Their day started at 8.00am and finished at 2.00pm or sometimes 2.30pm. They had a 15 min break in the morning and a half hour for lunch. Some children were given rice and a bean stew at first break, for many this was their only meal of the day. The classrooms felt cramped and over crowded (average class size was 40). All classrooms had chalk boards and the chalk dust often irritated my throat and made me cough. The learners (as they are referred to in SA) studied a number of subjects including Maths, English, Africans, Art and Science.



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A Volunteers experience in South Africa (continued).....

Teachers at the school were dedicated, but in desperate need of relevant professional development. There was NO in class support for these teachers despite having the most incredible range of pupil ability and large numbers of pupils with special needs.

Teachers did not seem to have any idea of the children's special needs. Within one class alone I had spotted children with moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia and possible dyscalculia, a fair number would, in an English school be classed as having Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD). Teachers were totally unaware of these facts and lacked the confidence and ability to make any kind of the diagnosis or judgements about the special needs of their pupils.

Although an illegal practice I witnessed children being smacked at the primary school. I saw a number of classes with up to 40 children sitting silently, but begging the question how much real understanding and learning is taking place? Managing a classroom of 40 children with a very wide range of special needs and no extra support was challenging but active learning methods combined with non violent communication strategies resulted in remarkably positive and successful outcomes.

Whilst in Southern Africa - I visited a number of schools in low socio economic areas; poverty, prejudice, crime, illness, over crowding and lack of resources were prevalent in all the schools, yet children were still keen to learn. Teachers were often lacking professional development and feeling unable to cope with the demands made from them and there seemed to be a breakdown in communication between the schools and the relevant education authorities.

The realist in me saw constant battles between good and evil and a sense that that it will take at least another 20 to 30 years before the apartheid legacy will allow equality of opportunities for ALL South Africans.

The idealist in me felt a real sense of hope as I experienced kindness and humanity of a magnitude I had never experienced before. As an outsider looking in I saw huge numbers of people (both local and international) working together for a common cause - a brighter future for ALL South Africa.

Harambee

Taking its name from the Swahili word for working in partnership, Harambee is a Development Education centre which promotes understanding and action on global issues. We provide opportunities for young people to understand more about how their everyday actions affect the world around them and how they can take action on global issues.

Tel: 01223 358 116 Email: info@harambeecentre.org.uk

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum Management Committee

Chair: Hazra Awal
Vice Chair: Redge Carpen
Secretary: Valerie Berkson
Treasurer: Joyce Andrade
Members: Odhavji Bharadwa
Jason Yao
Anil Soni
Patricia Crampton
Joseph Jabbie
Rajni Shah
Vincenzo Marino
Lileth Warford

Developing Partnerships with MENTER ABMEC

Huntingdonshire Community Association
Peterborough Council for Race Equality
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridge City Council

