



Annual Report 2011/12

Working towards eliminating discrimination

Campaigning for equality of opportunity

**Promoting good relations between all
persons in the Borough of Charnwood in
the County of Leicestershire**

*Registered Charity Number: 1088411
Company Number: 4198889*

Cover Design by Matt Fowle & Raquel Porras



Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood..
66 Nottingham Rd,
Loughborough,
Leicestershire.
LE11 1EU

The Office of the Mayor
Southfield Road,
Loughborough,
Leicestershire. LE11 2TX
Tel: 01509 634781
Email: mayor@charnwood.gov.uk
Web; www.charnwood.gov.uk

6th June 2012

To whom it may concern,

Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood

Many years ago, as a serving Borough Councillor I was nominated to sit on this fairly new panel, my first impressions were it was going to be hard committee to manage, whilst cramped up on a wet evening in an old shop.

But look now at the Oak Tree that has grown from that acorn, so during my Mayoral year along with the Mayoress, we have been able to see the fallen acorns that have spread across the borough, and attend many functions organised by this dedicated group of volunteers (there are still some oldies about).

May we wish the best of fortune for the future and success in all you do?

Yours sincerely

Councillor Bernard Burr.



Data protection
Your name and address may be stored electronically for the sole purpose of contacting you about Mayoral events. If you would prefer us not to retain Your contact details please tell us or tick the box and return this letter

Telephone: 01509 263151 Email: information@charnwood.gov.uk

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Board of Trustees

OFFICERS

Chair	Debbie Green
Vice chair (joint)	Val Watts & Anne Williams
Treasurer	Trevor Shaw
Company secretary	Peter Lewis

TRUSTEES

Abdus Shahid	Amrat Bava	Linda Shaw
Darren Naylor	Jewel Miah	Tony Payne
Pauline Joyce	Dave Thomas	

CO-OPTED TRUSTEES

Jill Vincent	Steve Phipps	Nilesh Shukla
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FINANCE & PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Steve Phipps	Trevor Shaw	Jewel Miah
Pauline Joyce		

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Debbie Green	Val Watts	Trevor Shaw
Amrat Bava	Dave Thomas	Tony Payne

MARKETING, PUBLICITY AND PR SUB GROUP

Peter Lewis	Linda Shaw	Jill Vincent
Abdus Shahid	Patricia Pinder	Ayesha Shahid

BUSINESS PLANNING GROUP

Amrat Bava	Jill Vincent	Pauline Joyce
Anne Trevor	Trevor Shaw	Staff

STAFF

Varsha Parmar	Development Officer/Co-ordinator
Kazi Mashud	Welfare Benefits & Immigration Officer
Chayara Chowdhury	Bangladeshi Liaison Officer
Amina Wadud	Bangladeshi Liaison Officer
Minara Rahman	Bangladeshi Outreach Officer
Nadja Rein	Youth Project Co-ordinator
Lesley Ansari	Training and Development Officer (HIAP)
Tony Kelly	Hate Incident Officer
Hazel Score	Hate Incident Officer (Nov to Feb 2011/12)

Chair's Report

First of all, thank you to our staff and trustees for their support in my first year as Chair. Taking over from the irreplaceable Daphne Beale was never going to be easy and I was aware that I could not come close to having the knowledge and experience she has from a life time working for equalities. However, we were blessed with more excellent trustees joining us last year who have hit the ground running and become an integral part of the HREC. And of course, our staff continue to be the most dedicated workers and wonderful individuals.



I would particularly like to thank my Vice chairs Anne Williams and Val Watts. I must also thank Trevor Shaw for his work not only as Treasurer but also for his work on updating policies, helping with and casting a critical eye over our applications for funding and our Business Plan, and being our Equality Representative to make sure we comply with our Quality Mark responsibilities.

So, the past year has been one of challenges and achievements. We began the year unsure what the newly elected coalition government would do, particularly regarding the public and voluntary sectors. As we have now seen there have been drastic cuts to many local authorities and charities. We are therefore extremely glad that, due to the commitment of our staff, we secured the third year of funding for our Hate Incident Action Project. Charnwood Borough Council have so far honoured their tapered grants for this year and Leicestershire County Council have given us till the end of September 2012 but will be liaising with us over what happens after. Next year we may have to alert our dedicated staff to the possibility of cuts in their hours. We go on working in hope that this will not happen and committed to the valuable work.

Having delivered the 2 year South Asian Women's Project, funded by Lloyds TSB Foundation, which ended July 2011, it was identified that this important empowerment needed to continue and be built upon

We applied to the Big Lottery, Reaching Communities Programme for a 5 year project working with South Asian women and successfully got through the first stage application and were invited to submit a full bid. This was submitted on 22nd April. The bid also included a capital part to extend our premises to provide confidential space downstairs and a disabled toilet. These works will greatly improve the quality of provision we can provide. We will be informed of the decision by end of July.

We were also successful in securing some funding from Loughborough East Area Forum to deliver a project on raising awareness of forced marriages and honour based violence. This project is for 6 months (January to June 2012) and our development worker has delivered workshops with Limehurst High School, local faith and community groups, women from Asian background amongst other events.

We have also worked hard to achieve at least level one in all 12 standards of the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO). This is not only good to get our management in order but is recognised by funders as an indicator of a well-run organisation. Among other things we are looking to strengthen the human rights side of our work so that we can also use this to help our clients as they take their place in our society.

Another area which we will be looking at over the next year is developing research into the needs and make up of our community. This will help us provide evidence when we submit bids for grants, but also ensure that we are able to target our resources most effectively and innovatively.

Over the many years I have been associated with our organisation there have been many dedicated staff, trustees and members so to all of them I say thank you. To those of you who are currently members I also say thank you. But I also want to encourage you to go on giving your time and energy to keeping all the work that we do as high profile as possible so that everyone appreciates its value. Whatever setbacks we may face over the coming years, we believe that our work is integral to meeting and identifying the needs of our Charnwood. It is only with the commitment and support of our members and staff that we can continue to do this.

Debbie Green
Chair

Business Plan Committee

This committee looks at the ever changing needs of the local communities and our work so that this can be reflected in our business plan which is a live working document. The information is monitored, evaluated and updated to be presented at our Annual General Meeting each year. This enables us to identify the gaps in service and look for funding sources to deliver the service. It also gives our funders and partners a clear picture of our structure, our achievements, a community needs analysis and our plans for the future. The Business Plan group continues to look at capacity for delivery both in terms of space and human resources.

The business plan presented to the 2011 AGM was a result of a major re-think of how we presented the work and intentions of the organisation. For this years AGM it was decided simply to update relevant sections of the plan and then carry out a more detailed review later in the year, as part of a review of the strategic direction of the organisation which is required due to continuing uncertainty about future funding. Therefore, the Trustees will be reviewing the business plan in more detail in the autumn of 2012 by which time the outcome of some pending funding applications will be known.

Debbie Green
Chair of Business Plan

Trustees Report

HR&EC is a Company Limited by Guarantee and the Trustees are the Directors of the Company. The Trustees have a legal liability to ensure that HR&EC complies with Companies House rules. As a Charity HR&EC is also responsible to the Charity Commission.

Tasks of Trustees

- Promoting good relations throughout the Borough
- Keeping staff and trustees well trained
- Managing supportively staff and volunteers
- Keeping our finances in good order
- Keeping our buildings fit for purpose
- Keeping policies up to date and in tune with latest legislation
- Ensuring our business plan reflects our strategic direction and is SMART
- Ensuring future sustainability
- Monitoring and evaluating our work
- Widening our membership to reflect our work.

The Trustees are volunteers who give their time, energy and expertise to serve the aims of the HR&EC. One of our tasks is to ensure we have a good balance of committed people to maintain the work and reputation of the organisation and we are always on the look out for others to share in this task. Do let us know if you feel able to help in this way.

The Board have continued to meet 6 weekly with short and well focused agendas. We have used our committees to do the detailed work but the Board of Trustees is the final decision making body. Induction and training of a high standard is provided for Trustees.

As a CLS and OISC accredited organisation we are subject to audit from time to time and this has helped us to keep our policies and procedures up to date with the latest requirements. In passing our latest audit we found where there were gaps and were able to fill them. We consider our Business Plan to be a working document and so have spent time ensuring it matches our practical aspirations.

We continue our work with volunteers and placement students from local schools and colleges and in the past year have supported over 10 students and currently have 4 volunteers with us on various projects.

Our future sustainability is important and in the present economic climate we need to be aware of the new trends in public service but also willing to challenge both local and national government when necessary.

Finally we would like to thank all our funders for the valuable grants that help us provide the services we do to the communities and the press, particularly, Andy Rush at the Echo for their on-going coverage of our work.

Finance & Property Committee Report

We started the year with a great deal of uncertainty. There were concerns that we would have insufficient funding to cover all of our expenditure; indeed, our budget showed a deficit of £9k for the year. Fortunately as the year progressed, the situation improved and by the end of the year we had almost broken even.

Regarding the financial year 2012/2013, at one stage we had to budget for Leicestershire County Council funding for casework ending September 2012 due to their changing the commissioning strategy. We now know that our current level of funding should continue till June 2013. Therefore we are in a better position for a break even budget in 2012/2013.

We recognised that we need to broaden our approach to funding and therefore we used Voluntary Action Leicestershire to give us training on commissioning and procurement.

As a result of this training we now look at commissioning contracts that are advertised and have secured a two year partnership contract with The Race Equality Centre Leicester and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) Centre Leicester on engagement and representation across BME, Faith and LGB&T communities on behalf of Leicestershire County Council.

Building on the good work of the Hate Incident Action Project, the Equality & Human Rights Commission agreed to continue the funding into year 3 and the project will end December 2012. We are keen to secure on going funding for this valuable work in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council and the Leicestershire Police.

Our South Asian Women's Project, funded by Lloyds TSB Foundation for 2 years, came to an end in July 2012. Our staff have continued supporting South Asian women in the community on a voluntary basis due to demand from them. We have applied to the Big Lottery, Reaching Communities Programme for a 5 year project building on this work. We should know the outcome by July 2012.

We were successful with a bid to the Loughborough East Area Forum for a 6 month project on raising awareness of forced marriages and honour based violence issues.

Finance & Property have met monthly to monitor the budget and look at property issues. Pauline Joyce, a trustee and member of the group, has taken on the role of Health & Safety Officer, and we have a new and fully updated H&S policy. She has a practical approach and undertakes to solve basic maintenance issues in and around the premises. Through Pauline, we have secured sponsorship, firstly through Maxlowe Limited for a new first aid box and training course for a member of staff, and secondly, through A C PAT Testing Limited who checked all electrical equipment free of charge. Again, we would like to thank both companies for their support. Their details can be found on our web page.

Going forward there are significant challenges and opportunities with regard to the funding position. This will require the organisation to continue to be proactive and flexible in the way it approaches funding issues and meets the needs of communities and service users. It will also need to consider new ways of working and service delivery and these will form part of the strategic review that Trustees will be undertaking in Autumn 2012. I am pleased that once again our annual accounts show a clean bill of health and our auditor found no problems with them.

My sincere thanks go to the staff of our accountants/auditors at Marsh & Moss Ltd for their friendly and professional services and also to Varsha Parmar for her skills with the day to day accounting.

Steve Phipps
Chair of F&P

Personnel Committee Report

The committee meets regularly and it reports to each Board meeting. Once again we would like to thank all the trustees, staff members and volunteers who have enabled us to keep such high standards in our work and service to the community.

Members of the Personnel Committee have continued annual appraisals for staff and made sure they have adequate training for their work and professional development. They also attend, or have feedback from, the regular staff meetings. Staff and trustees had their annual induction in September where we looked at our vision for the future and welcomed new trustees and co-opted member. Trustees also attended training on commissioning and procurement delivered by Voluntary Action Leicestershire and many attended some excellent training on the Human Rights Act in Derby, which included an inspiring presentation by Shami Chakrabarti.

Thank you to all our members who give us encouragement in our work and to our excellent staff who provide such a professional and friendly service to Charnwood.

Deb Green
Chair of Personnel.

Company Secretary's Report

As always we have complied with all the regulations of the Companies House and Charity Commission by filing in the annual return in good time. We as an organisation would like our current work to go from strength to strength and appeal to all individuals and organisations to help and support us in our work.

If you are interested please contact the office to see how you could be involved. We are particularly seeking to engage with groups and individuals from all the equality strands.

Peter Lewis
Company Secretary

Marketing Publicity & Public Relations Committee

On our Marketing, Publicity & PR committee there are 3 external members elected at the AGM and several members from the Board of Trustees. This last year the elected members at the AGM were Patricia Pinder and Ayesha Shahid with one space that was not filled. Linda Shaw, Jill Vincent, Abdus Shahid and I were the Trustees on this group. On behalf of HR&EC, I would like to express our thanks to them all for their support throughout the year.

The group has been very active in identifying ways of raising awareness of issues of concern to the local communities and in line with our expanding remit to work on all equalities, bringing issues faced by particular groups to the attention of agencies, members and individuals.

In the last year we delivered a youth conference in Georgia, funded by the British Council in September. This will be our 13th conference and we are very proud of our track record. We had our usual coffee morning in December which is always a great opportunity for our members to drop in for a coffee and a chance to meet others and the staff.

Other events include a conference with high profile speakers on raising awareness of forced marriage and honour based violence through the Loughborough East Area Forum funding.

Our Annual Public Lecture held in June 2012 (page 28), was held at Loughborough University by invitation of the Vice Chancellor, where the guest speaker, Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons spoke on "*Reform and Renewal of the House of Commons*".

This group is also responsible for the Membership of HR&EC and we are constantly looking at ways of broadening our membership, particularly in light of our widening remit on all the equalities. All applications for new members go to this group for recommendation to the Trustees. We also continue to work on PQASSO standards that are relevant to this group.

We would like to thank the local press, particularly Loughborough Echo, for the regular coverage we receive on our work. We are always seeking to recruit new members and welcome applications for either individual members or organisations to affiliate.

We also have spaces for co-opted members to our Board of Trustees and several sub groups, so if anyone is interested in our work and wishes to get involved, please visit our website on www.humanrightsandequalitiescharnwood.org or ring the office on (01509) 261651.

Peter Lewis CC
Chair of MP&PR

Membership 2011/2012

Hon President

The Mayor of Charnwood

Hon Vice President

Dr A Strachan

Hon Solicitor

Mr D Pagett-Wright (Moss Solicitors)

Hon Treasurer

Mr T Shaw

Individual Members

A Bashir	A Bava
J Capleton	J R Catt
V Clark	H Clegg
A Gimpel	A Gimpel
A Gous	J Harrison
M Hopewell	R Jalota
M Jenkinson	M Jones
P Joyce	R Kershaw
P Lewis	J Miah
N Morgan	D Naylor
B Newton	S G Patel
S Phipps	P Pinder
T Priestly	A Reed
A Shahid	M A Shahid
A Sharpe	T Shaw
P Singh	A Smith
A Strachan	S M Velado
J Vincent	

Organisations

All Saints with Holy Trinity	P Pinder	V Clark
Ashmount School	D Deacon	D Thomas
Bangladesh Social Association	S A Choudhury	A Muhit
Burleigh Community College	C Horsfall	
Bridge	P Nicholls	
Charnwood Arts	K Ryan	R Abrahams
Charnwood Borough Council	J Capleton	G Gay
	D Green	P Lewis
Connexions Loughborough	E Rolfe	
Fearon Hall	Z Weatherly	
Geeta Bhawan	H Rana	K Passi
Leics Adult Learning Service	V Watts	
Leicestershire Libraries	L Bowell	
Leicestershire Teachers Association	G Gay	
Limehurst High School	S Coneran	R Das
Loughborough Baptist Church	S Cramer	M Speight
Loughborough Churches Partnership	D Beale	T Payne
Loughborough College	A William	A Bullock
Loughborough Council of Faiths	M Graham	F Catling
L'boro & District Hate Incident Group	L Shaw	
L'boro & District Victim Support	K Small	I Thurlby
L'boro United Reformed Church	D Beale	T Payne
Loughborough University	Rev S Richardson	
Loughborough Youth Affairs	A Lake	
Rawlins Community College	C Ore	T Walker
Rendell Primary School	H Coleman	
Rosebury St Peter's C C	D Bentley	
Swaminarayan BAPS Sanstha	R Limbachia	
Thurmaston Jagruti Group	S Valand	K Sharma
Trinity Methodist Church		
Turning Point	P Callanan	
Voluntary Action Charnwood	N Lambert	S Leong
Youth Shelter	J Fele	

Welfare Rights and Immigration April 2011 - March 2012

1. Introduction:

The WRIO has been providing advice, support and guidance to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and other communities in the Borough of Charnwood. The WRIO also engaged in consultation with Local Authorities and other statutory and non-statutory organisations in Charnwood involving and affecting BME communities, including some development work.

This year posed a challenge due to various welfare reforms which took place. The introduction of the Employment Support Allowance was a key focus for part of the year due to the need to understand the complexities of the new benefit and its potential impact for people using our services.

There were also changes to other key areas such as in Housing, Health & Hospital, Immigration and Nationality.

2. Contacts, Liaison and Meetings:

To ensure a wide range of services for service users, the WRIO has continued to work and liaise with many organisations, including:

- Home Office - UKBA
- Advice UK
- Community Legal Service – Quality Mark
- Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants
- Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner
- Child Poverty Action Group
- Leicestershire Working Together
- Charnwood Health Forum
- Primary Health Care Trust
- The Pension Service
- HM Customs and Revenue
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Leicestershire Social Services Department
- The Bridge Housing Advice
- Charnwood Citizens Advice Bureau
- Loughborough Job Centre Plus
- Bangladesh Social Association
- Shree Ram Krishna Centre
- Charnwood Refugee & Asylum Seekers Forum
- Turning Point

3. Advice, Information, Support and Guidance for Service Users:

The WRIO has been providing advice and maintaining casework on Welfare Rights, Immigration and Nationality, Housing, Health and other areas to service users face to face, by telephone and correspondence on their behalf with various agencies

such as Charnwood Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council and Social Services Department, Department of Work and Pensions, Job Centre Plus, Pension Service, Inland Revenue for Child Benefits and Tax Credits.

General Help and Casework is well established in Charnwood. An average of 10/12 service users visit HREC office on every working day and get help and support with their queries. The number of queries we dealt with in the past year was 1649 and the number service users was 1250.

4. Statistics for the year 2011 – 2012:

The table below shows the number of cases and queries we have dealt with in the year 2011 – 2012:

Nature of cases/queries	Total
Welfare Benefits	552
Housing and Accommodation	392
Immigration and Nationality	141
Training/Education Support	169
Miscellaneous Support	361
Total Cases/Queries	1615

Statistics of Service users	Total
White British	34
Indian	386
Pakistani	44
Bangladeshi	319
Other Asian	112
Caribbean	58
African	65
Chinese	57
Other Ethnic Group	37
TOTAL	1112

Gender Breakdown	Total
Male	685
Female	427
Total Number of Service Users	1112

We are a Community Legal Service's Quality Mark organisation and regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner.

5. Audit from CLS Quality Mark and OISC:

The Quality and Standard of the services are constantly under review. With support and guidance from Trevor Shaw, the Quality representative, a regular meeting to ensure maintenance of the Community Legal Services Quality Mark has taken place.

We have successfully undergone an external audit from the Community Legal Service's Quality Mark and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner. Relevant policies and procedures have been updated. The next audit may take place in June 2013.

6. OISC Continuous Professional Development (CPD):

The WRIO has successfully completed the CPD hours for 2011 – 2012 which is a regulatory requirement to continue Immigration and Nationality advice work set out by OISC. The CPD courses contain both core and non-core modules designed in conjunction with Open University.

7. Training on HMRC Tax Credit and other matter:

In the period from April 2011 to March 2012 the WRIO has attended several training sessions on Welfare Benefits, Tax Credit and Immigration. Training sessions were held in Leicester and Birmingham and HMRC and Advice UK provided them free. Issues covered by training sessions were as follows:

- HMRC Tax Credit.
- Professional Conduct in Immigration Advice.
- Welfare Benefit Updates.

Kazi Mashud
Welfare Rights/Immigration Officer.

Bangladeshi Community Project

There are two part time Liaison Officers, Amina Wadud and Chayara Chowdhury. These officers both divide their time between the HR&EC and Bangladesh Social Association offices. The officers provide services on immigration and welfare rights, as well as liaising with statutory and voluntary organisations on behalf of clients.

Chayara Chowdhury returned to her job in July 2011 after her maternity leave and whilst she was on her leave Amina carried on with her normal working hours and Minara Rahman covered part of Chayara's hours.

During this time the number of clients seen did not decrease and in fact stayed more or less the same. This shows us that, despite the changes, there was no decline in the number of service users. The service is very vital and important for the community.

The workers have seen a gradual increase in the number of female clients. This is due to the fact that there are female Liaison Officers delivering the service. Female users have stated that they feel more at ease with female officers when discussing certain issues regarding Welfare Benefits, Immigration matters or other personal matters. We have also seen an increase in the number of clients from European and Middle Eastern backgrounds.

The Liaison Officers have helped a large number of clients with either Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance applications this year. These forms are very lengthy and tedious. The success rate of clients receiving the benefits has been very high as many of these clients were not aware that they may be eligible for this benefit.

Officers have attended a number of courses, especially on welfare benefits. As the law is changing all the time we need to ensure that both of the officers are up to date with the changes. Both Amina and Chayara have completed their Office for the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), Continued Professional Development (CPD) for 2011 as this is mandatory. This allows the Liaison Officers to give Immigration advice at the level at which they are registered with the OISC body, Amina Wadud at Level 1, Chayara Chowdhury at Level 2.

We feel that the service is vital. Although the members of the community are becoming independent, there are still members from the community who are vulnerable and need our help and support.

Funding should be made available so that the officers are able to attend training to enhance their knowledge which is vital when providing services to clients. We appreciate the continued support from voluntary and statutory organisations and from our funders and recommend that it continues for the foreseeable future.

NB People sometimes come to us with one query and, because they trust us, will bring up other concerns which we can then help them with. This can make the time we spend with them longer but is extremely valuable to them.

Case Study 1

Mrs B has been receiving long term Incapacity benefit (IB), but due to changes in the benefit system she was being switched onto a new benefit, Employment Support Allowance (ESA). Mrs B's ESA benefit was not awarded. The advisor dealing with her benefits had left employment. Mrs B came to me very distraught and confused as to why her benefit was not continued as her health and financial circumstances had not changed.

I contacted the ESA department and, on their instructions, I advised Mrs B to contact her GP, and put in an appeal for the ESA. Mrs B's appeal reversed the ESA decision and she was awarded the full benefit. Mrs B is a vulnerable elderly widow, and speaks no English, if I had not contacted the ESA department and explained Mrs B's situation, Mrs B to date would not be in receipt of EAS.

Case Study 2

Mrs S used to receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for her son who suffers from severe eczema and asthma. She was sent the renewal form but due to the technicality of the questions in this 45 page form Mrs S struggled to fill in the form and her son's DLA benefit did not continue.

I contacted the DLA department and a new form was sent out to Mrs S. I advised Mrs S to contact the specialists her son saw regularly in order to get a statement from them in support of the new application. This was to confirm his illness and the level of care that was required in order to stabilise her son's condition. After receiving the necessary documents from the health professionals, I helped Mrs S fill in her son's new DLA form. Her son's DLA benefit has now been awarded.

Case Study 3

Mrs K, a widow, initially migrated from Bangladesh speaking very poor English, and has limited reading and writing ability. She has been lawfully resident in the U.K for 5 years and she wanted to apply for naturalisation (to become a British citizen with the view to obtaining a British passport). Mrs K had been advised she needed to wait another 12 months to be able to apply for naturalisation.

Mrs K came to me with a working tax credit query and asked about the naturalisation process. I told Mrs K that under the immigration rules she was eligible to apply for naturalisation. I helped Mrs K fill in form 'AN'. Her naturalisation application was processed within 6 months and then she attended the citizenship ceremony in Leicester. Upon receiving the naturalisation certificate we applied for her British Passport. Three weeks later her British passport arrived in the post. Mrs K now is a proud British Citizen.

Chayara Chowdhury & Amina Wadud
Liaison Officers

Statistics for work done at both HR&EC and BSA

Immigration /Nationality	390
Employment / Education	69
Welfare Benefits	911
Housing	763
Others	128
Total	2261

Age Group	Male	Female
Under 18	0	3
18-64	782	1073
65-74	129	99
75-84	18	0
Total	929	1175

Ethnicity	Male	Female
African	1	
Asian	1	
Other Mixed	13	16
Indian	109	134
Bangladeshi	611	856
African	2	2
Chinese	25	17
Other	180	148
Total	942	1173

Disability		
	Male	Female
Total	309	253

Outreach work statistics

Immigration/Nationality	0
Employment/Education	5
Welfare Benefits	255
Housing	144
Personal	150
Total	554

Ethnicity	Male	Female
Other White background	2	0
Other Mixed background	0	8
Indian	14	12
Bangladeshi	201	222
Other Ethnic group	2	0
Total	219	242

Age Group	Female	Male
Under 18	0	0
18 – 64	186	140
65 – 74	37	20
75—84	19	59
85+	0	0
Total	242	219

Outreach Work

The outreach service has become very popular and is well accessed by the local community. The service continues to provide advice on welfare benefits and support clients in dealing with official correspondence, filling in application forms and applying for benefits, including disability living allowance, carers allowance and blue badge parking. There have also been a number of clients who have been referred to social services to receive further help with disability aids and adaptations around the house.

Over the past year there have been some changes in the benefits system and many cutbacks in services. Some of the application forms have also changed and are harder and more detailed to fill in. This has had an increased pressure on our workload. It has been very important to keep ourselves updated with the changes and take up regular training in order to provide accurate information to our clients.

Case study1

Mrs R is a carer for her mother and her husband works 16 hours pw. In April the new tax credit rules require couples to work 24 hours pw to qualify for working tax credits. When she received her renewal pack the notes did not state that carers claiming as a couple would still qualify for working tax credits if one of them worked 16 hours, however this was clearly mentioned on the website. When I rang to ask tax credits about this the advisor did not know about this either until I referred her to the website. This was good news for the family as they would continue to receive working tax credits without having to worry about finding another job straight away.

Case Study2

Mrs Z and her husband are elderly and have numerous health problems. Although her husband receives attendance allowance there was no one claiming carers allowance for him. After a home visit I was able to identify some of their needs. I contacted social services for an assessment to have aids fitted in the house, claimed attendance allowance for Mrs Z and applied for a blue badge parking permits which would be very useful for when going to their hospital appointments.

I have also advised the family that they would be entitled to claim carers allowance for looking after Mrs Z. The family were extremely grateful for the outreach service as they wouldn't have known how and where to get the extra help and support from. They are now continuing to use this service regularly.

Minara Rahman
Outreach Officer

Hate Incident Action Project

2011/12 was the second year of the Hate Incident Action Project (HIAP) in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire Constabulary, and funded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The aims of the project are to:

- give support, advice and guidance to victims of hate incidents across all the equality strands
- provide awareness raising to groups, agencies, schools etc to increase understanding of hate incidents and how to report them
- re-visit existing Reporting Centres and establish new ones that are easily accessible
- provide training to Reporting Centre staff

The target for 2011/12 was to support 15 victims of hate incidents and we are able to report that the project has been successful in helping 23 victims as a result of 17 client referrals.

This year we have recorded 21 hate incidents, 20 of which were reported through our Hate Incident Reporting Centres.

Incident types according to hate category/diversity strand:

Hate category	No. of Incidents
Race	11
Religion	7
Disability	6
Homophobia	1
Age	1
Gender	1

NB: Incidents can be recorded for multiple reasons, so the total number of incident types by hate category/diversity strand may exceed the number of incidents.

Incident types:

Incident type	No. of Incidents
Verbal abuse	8
Harassment	7
Intimidation	3
Assault	1
Graffiti	1
Offensive material	1

NB: Incidents often contain multiple offence types. In such cases the most serious offence/incident type has been used for recording purposes.

Some positive case outcomes have included:

A young single parent family who were subjected to racial harassment by local youths. Due to the intervention of the Project, police patrols were increased and suspected perpetrators were warned by their housing provider in regard to their future conduct. The situation improved; however, the victim remained anxious about the future and was therefore supported in regard to a housing transfer. The family now live in an area of Charnwood which is more appropriate to their needs.

A disabled man and his disabled son who were victimised and taunted by children due to their disabilities and vulnerability. This included trespassing onto their property and theft. The housing provider recognised this as a case of hate crime and implemented crime prevention measures to reduce the prospect of further victimisation. Additional advice and support was provided by the Project Hate Incident Officer. As a result of measures taken, following one failed attempt at entering the property, there has been no further incident.

It is interesting to note that three Project clients have been vulnerable single female parents of black or Asian heritage, living in isolated circumstances without the support of a community or family framework.

In regard to hot-spots, most of the reported incidents have occurred in areas of higher social deprivation such as Loughborough's Lemyngton, Hastings, Ashby and Storer Wards, these being part of the Loughborough Central police beat. In this respect there is high correlation with police recorded incidents.

To improve understanding of hate issues, why it is important to report hate, and to inform how and where hate incidents can be reported, we have run or supported a variety of events and awareness sessions at various venues across the Borough.

These have included:

- Charnwood Borough Council Anti-Social Behaviour Road Shows
- Charnwood Area Forum meetings
- Charnwood libraries
- Leicestershire County Council's Stop and Tell Campaign
- Loughborough College Anti-Bullying Week
- Loughborough College Health and Wellbeing event
- Charnwood Action Group
- Bangladeshi Social Association
- United Taxi Drivers Association
- Moira Centre Adult Learning Group

- Leicester Deaf Action Group
- Sorrel Youth Café.
- Passion Youth Club
- Charnwood Youth Council
- Loughborough Rotary Club
- Shepshed Volunteer Centre
- Older Persons' event, Loughborough Town Hall
- Ulverscroft Grange and Wellbeing Centre
- Charnwood Mental Health Forum
- Thurmaston Community Centre
- Mountfields Lodge, Leicestershire County Council Youth Service
- Loughborough University Unison Branch
- HR&EC Annual General Meeting

The number of Reporting Centres has increased to 44 and covers all areas of the borough. This includes private sector venues, mostly shops to give people from Eastern Europe, the Middle East and East Asia an opportunity to report incidents in a familiar environment.

We have also had published various awareness raising articles within local press, community newsletters, specialist publications and e-mail distributions. These have included:

- Hate Incident Reporting Centre Quarterly Newsletters
- Loughborough Echo
- Charnwood Action Group
- Charnwood Neighbourhood Watch
- Leicestershire LGBT Group
- The Zone – Regional LGBT magazine
- Garendon School magazine
- The Hut magazine (Ashby Rd, Loughborough residents)
- Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood Quarterly Newsletters and website
- Loughborough Town Centre Partnership website

In January we supported the latest phase of Leicestershire County Council's 'Stop and Tell' campaign through combined events at Loughborough College, focusing specifically on victims with mental health issues and learning disabilities.

Information Sharing

We continue to share information with our partners at strategic and operational levels in accordance with legal requirements in the interests of our clients and to help reduce crime and disorder. As such we have compiled an Information Sharing Agreement which has been agreed and adopted by the Hate Incident Action Group. Members will sign a confidentiality statement at the start of each meeting.

Recognition

Victim Support in Leicestershire has recognised HIAP as an example of good practice in Charnwood for supporting victims of hate crime. Research commissioned by the Independent Victims Commissioner and funded by the Home Office is published in “Listening and Learning – Improving support for victims in Leicestershire”.

Case study: Human Rights and Equalities Charnwood

An example of good practice in the Leicestershire Constabulary area in relation to hate crime is through Human Rights and Equalities Charnwood's (HR&EC) Hate Incident Action Project which aims to increase the number of reporting centres across Charnwood & North West Leicestershire, and to provide support for victims of hate crime. The help offered includes emotional support, advice about the criminal justice system, advocacy, re-housing advice, representation at housing associations, solicitor visits, CCTV & personal alarm advice, and letters of support for a move to a new home. Research suggests that victims of hate crime have complex needs that could arise from difficulties with language or mobility for example, so a service that offers victim support based on an understanding of different aspects of their life is greatly appreciated.

This service has been funded for three years (currently approaching the start of their third year), which has allowed the service to fully develop and establish within the community. The issue of long-term funding has been discussed during this research project, and it has been found that a minimum of three-year funding cycles is preferred, in order to prevent service delivery or staffing issues towards the end of a contract affecting the provision of services. The Project has been successful in helping 23 victims as a result of 17 referrals during year two. Referrals have been made in a variety of ways, either direct from the victims themselves or through Hate Incident Reporting Centres and partner agencies. The Project has also managed to set up a focus group, which has input from service users to guide feedback on their work. The group will also feed into the Hate Incident Action Group, to provide additional service user feedback with regards to other service providers. Unfortunately funding for this project finishes at the end of 2012 and will not be renewed.

Conclusion

Following an extremely successful first year, Phase 2 of the Project has continued to deliver many positive outcomes. We continue to be encouraged by the response of the various organisations with which we have had contact, both old and new, and we believe that the Project has made a real difference in how hate issues are perceived, reported and dealt with. We would like to thank everyone with whom we have worked and look forward to an equally successful Phase 3.

Tony Kelly & Lesley Ansari
Hate Crime Project Officers

South Asian Women's Project

This two year funded project by the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England & Wales ended in July 2011. Events and information workshops delivered in partnership during the two years included:

First Aid Training
IT Classes
Food hygiene
Educational Fair
Health Fair
Interfaith and Intercultural work
Pilgrimage of Prayer
Feast of Faiths
Eid
Celebration of the International Women's Day
Loughborough in Bloom
Meeting with the local MP in the House of Parliament and visit of the Westminster Abbey
Work with Schools
Loughborough Environmental Women's Network (LEWN)
Partnership work with the Bangladesh Social Association
Loughborough College and ESOL classes
Engagement with other women's groups
Sport Classes for Muslim Women

The project has left a much needed gap in motivating the women to engage with local events and take on opportunities for training, development and empowering themselves.

HR&EC has applied to the Big Lottery, Reaching Communities Programme for a five year project to build on the good work of the South Asian Women's Project.

We will know the outcome of the bid in the next few months and sincerely hope we are successful in ensuring that the women in Loughborough have the best chances for playing a fuller role in their families and society.

Minara Rahman (SAWP Development Officer) receiving a cheque from Loughborough University for Loughborough In Bloom 2012 project led by local South Asian women.



Forced Marriage Project

This is a 6 month project is to raise awareness of the issues of forced marriages and honour based violence, through delivering workshops and training sessions to community groups, schools and service providers in the Borough of Charnwood.

Our aim for the project is:

- To encourage dialogue, discussion and provide support, information and advice on the issue of Forced Marriages and honour based violence.
- Emphasise forced marriages and honour based violence as an abuse of human rights.
- To reduce and prevent forced marriage through education and awareness raising in schools, service providers, and community groups.
- To create conditions in the community that would facilitate attitudinal changes towards the issue of forced marriage.

The project has delivered various workshops/ events/ sessions

Shajahal Mosque

This event was well attended by approximately 20 community members who were interested in talking about the issue of Forced marriage and honour based violence. We looked into how some use religion as a justification for forced marriage and honour based violence. Everybody agreed religion denounces such acts of forced marriage and honour based violence.

Mina Event

The Mina event was open to women who locally reside in Loughborough. A Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence presentation was given on what forced marriage is and examples of real case studies of individuals that have been through the situation were shown.

Loughborough Council of Faiths

We were invited to give a presentation on this issue.

We had range of people from different faiths (Hindu, Christian, Druid, Quaker, and Brahma Kumaris) who attended this event.

There was an open discussion on the subject and the theme that was coming across that there was a fine line between a forced marriage and arranged marriage and often it may be blurred. Many were shocked that there is a huge number of forced marriages and honour based violence that occur in the U.K. Also it was said that more needs to be done to raise awareness within the communities.

Friday Group

This is a local community group that meets regularly on Fridays who talk about issues that affect them and were interested in finding out about forced marriage and honour based violence. We spoke at great length on how issues of forced marriage and honour based violence is still a taboo topic and often swept under the carpet.

Limehurst School

We spoke to about the issue of forced marriage and domestic violence in detail with 25 parents and who were also part of the ESOL group.

Forced Marriage & Honour Based Violence conference

This conference took place on Friday 22nd of June 2012 with guest speaker **Dr Aisha K. Gill** who is a Reader in Criminology at the University of Roehampton.

Dr Gill has extensive experience of providing expert advice to the Government, Ministry of Justice, Scotland Yard, Crown Prosecution Service, and the voluntary sector on legal policy issues related to so-called 'honour' killings and forced marriage, and has challenged politicians to be more inclusive of BMER women's voices in policy-making on issues of gender-based violence and human rights.

Other key note speakers included Meena Kumari who currently Works as the Manager for the SAFE project which is part of Foundation Housing (East Midlands Housing Association). SAFE are a Outreach support service funded by Supporting people Leicester City Council. SAFE support women who are at risk or have been at risk of Domestic Abuse. SAFE have dealt with a number of Forced Marriages Cases and have seen an increase in these cases since SAFE was set up in 2009. SAFE can be contacted on 0800 022 33 53. Meena Kumari is also the Director of HOPE Training and Consultancy (Leic) Ltd and has been delivering training on Forced Marriage issues since 2007. HOPE also now runs 8 week programs for young people that have been effected by Forced Marriages and Honour Based Violence. HOPE can be contacted on www.hopetraining.co.uk

Marie Jenkinson, the other speaker, is a caseworker at the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU), which is a joint Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office Unit. The FMU is the government's one-stop shop for dealing with forced marriage casework and outreach.

The Forced Marriage Unit works closely with partners across government, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations in order to effect policy for tackling forced marriage in the UK. It also runs a public helpline, which provides confidential advice and support to both victims and survivors, as well as to practitioners with responsibility for handling forced marriage cases. All of the FMUs caseworkers are experienced in the cultural, social and emotional issues surrounding forced marriage.

Rumena Choudhury

Development Officer for Forced Marriage Project.

International Youth Training Course

Organizing of a Youth Exchange – a Starter Pack

This seven-day training course, took place in Kobuleti, Georgia, between 23.09.2011 and 1.10.2011. It brought together 30 youth workers from NGOs dealing with migration issues from EU and EECA countries.

They addressed issues pertaining to challenges and opportunities related to migration and mobility in Europe, including East-West and South-North migration, European mobility programmes and raising awareness of the challenges for young people of international migration. Through the training course, participating youth workers gained knowledge and skills to develop effective migration and mobility-related projects in their countries and communities.

Nadja Rein
Youth Conference Co-ordinator



Annual Public Lecture
Reform and renewal of the House of Commons
By The Rt Hon John Bercow
Speaker, House of Commons

The Rt Hon John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons was the guest speaker the Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood's annual lecture on 14th June. John Bercow spoke on the subject of 'Reform and Renewal of the House of Commons' . Over 80 people enjoyed the lecture, which was held at the Cope Auditorium at Loughborough University.

Deb Green, Chair of the HR&E Charnwood said: 'We were very proud and honoured to be hosting such a prestigious speaker. John Bercow gave a very honest and thoughtful insight into the operation of Parliament and how it has, and is, changing to the needs of our democracy'

Mr Bercow remarked that he admired the work being undertaken by the Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood and particularly highlighted the Hate Incident Reporting Project for praise. After considering how Parliament has developed in it's current form, Mr Bercow's lecture went on to consider how the practice of government was becoming more open and the Government less protected from open criticism. He also commented on the positive cross party parliamentary debates and work carried out by committees, but these rarely reported by the media who tended to report conflict. This did not allow a true portrayal of the business of the House.

After the lecture, John Bercow took questions from the floor. These included the Leveson Inquiry and the impact of a future elected upper chamber to the supremacy Of Parliament.

HR&EC would like to thank the Vice Chancellor and Loughborough University for their kind support and invitation to the campus.



Jean Lewis, Debbie Green, Chair of HR&EC, The Rt Hon John Bercow, Speaker, House of Commons, Peter Lewis, Chairman of Leics County Council and Deputy Mayor of Charnwood, Cllr Sandra Forrest.

Loughborough Mela 2012 **“Communities Together”**



This year's Mela took place on Sunday 10th June for the fourth time in Loughborough Town Centre.

Loughborough Mela is an exciting partnership event between Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood, Charnwood Arts, Voluntary Action Charnwood, with involvement from local community groups, including the Bangladesh Social Association, Fearon Hall, Shree Ram Krishna Centre and other agencies and individuals. The events are financially supported by Charnwood Borough Council with sponsors from local voluntary and statutory bodies, including Loughborough University and Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing.

The events showcase different cultures and give the audience a flavour of the rich and diverse communities in Charnwood. In addition, there are fairground rides, food and specialist market stalls and the usual friendly relaxed and harmonious atmosphere.

Whilst the core of the Mela remains a celebration of Asian culture, entertainment included a wide variety of music and dancing from across the world, the main underlying theme of the Mela, that of encouraging people from different nationalities & cultures to work together in bringing communities together, was clearly achieved.

Quoting Mike Jones, a local community member and key player for the Melas,”

“Loughborough Mela is now established as the town's largest annual multi-cultural event and it was great to see so many people of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds working together and thoroughly enjoying themselves. The sheer variety of acts and the way that those attending broadly reflected the population as a whole, were a constant reminder of the richness of our local community.

Our thanks are due to everyone who contributed, whether as a performer or volunteer, especially our Mela Co-ordinator for the second year, Leylah Bhamra, without whom it could not have been so successful”.

Quoting Neil Lambert, Chair of the Mela Group,

“As chair of the organising committee, it has been a pleasure to bring active partners together and make the Mela a success! However, we would really like to hand control over direct to local communities and groups to ensure future sustainability – if you enjoyed participating but would like to organise for 2013 and beyond please contact Varsha at HR&EC for a chat, or myself @ JSH, Neil Lambert, Chief Executive John Storer House Foundation & Voluntary Action Charnwood ”

Other work

Loughborough Council of Faiths (LCoF)

We continue to work very closely with the Loughborough Council of Faiths especially under our brief for working with religion and belief.

Loughborough Council of Faiths was formed in 1996 to create a forum in which different faith communities could meet and work in the interests of the whole community. The Council is not bound by one faith but within it people of different faiths seek high spiritual values together: peace, harmony and a spirit of unity are at the top of our agenda.

Mission Statement

- To show that people of different faiths can share peace.
- To challenge all people of faith to adopt values of respect, tolerance and co-operation.
- To allow people of different faiths to identify common areas of concern and action.
- To point to the significance of faith-issues and spirituality for today's society.

Loughborough Council of Faiths:

- provides a body for consultation e.g. ambulance, resilience, mayoralty, local authorities
- promotes harmony and cohesion through increased religious/faith understanding between the faith communities
- enables representatives to go back to their communities to pass on information and take matters for discussion e.g. in consultation exercises with Local Authorities and agencies
- encourages individuals and communities to bridge and link e.g. to have the confidence to meet and work with others.
- forms strong links across communities to enable peaceful responses in times of crisis
- promotes good relations across communities by holding events that encourage those of all faiths and none to meet together and learn respect for each other.

Charnwood Refugees and Asylum Seekers Forum

We carry on supporting, and are part of the multi forum of agencies working with refugees and asylum seekers. Issues and concerns are shared at the meetings and we invite people from agencies to respond to any issues raised.

East Midlands Racial Equality Consortium (EMREC)

Trustees and staff have continued their involvement with the work of EMREC during the year.

66 Nottingham Road

Loughborough

LE11 1EU

Tel: 01509 261651

Fax: 01509 267826

Email:

info@humanrightsandequalitiescharnwood.org

Website:

www.humanrightsandequalitiescharnwood.org

