

Skills, employment and enterprise services need to take on the race agenda

There is an urgent necessity for policy across the skills, employment and enterprise services in the East of England to take on the race equality agenda in a more comprehensive, systematic and consistent way. This is one of the key findings of the research commissioned by MENTER in December 2006 into BME communities' access to skills, employment and enterprise services. The research was funded by the East of England

Development Agency (EEDA) and carried out by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion.

This is the first time in the country that systematic research of this kind has been done in a region. MENTER and EEDA hope to disseminate the findings of this research both within the Region and outside as inequality in access to services persists and more joined up work needs to be done by service providers in

order to address the issues raised in the report.

The research was done in four stages: (1) a review of previous studies and data on BME groups in skills, employment and enterprise; (2) an analysis of the policy context in the East of England; (3) stakeholder interviews and survey; (4) focus groups to capture the individual and community-shared experiences of services, from a BME
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New Sikh landmark Gurdwara opens in Bedford



One of the largest Sikh temples in Britain was officially opened in Bedford in April.

The new Guru Nanak Gurdwara Building, on Ford End Road in Queens Park, Bedford, will become the
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perspective. The report concludes with some good practice examples for each of the three areas.

Some of the key findings were:

- Although inequalities exist these vary across communities e.g. much higher unemployment rates in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities especially for women
- A number of crosscutting barriers that BME groups experience such as labour market changes, an ethnic penalty etc. that make for poorer access
- Low take up of programmes and services, low awareness of services and higher prevalence of poor outcomes among BME groups
- BME individuals are more likely to be Job Seeker Allowance claimants than white people
- BME groups have higher rates of self-employment and individuals are more likely to go into higher education than the white group

Some of the recommendations were:

- A need to personalise services to be more flexible and adaptable to a range of needs. If services were revamped with BME groups in mind it would produce a system better suited for all
- The necessity of increasing partnership between mainstream service providers and the voluntary community sector
- More work needs to be done with employers e.g. the promotion of a diversity kitemark such as C2E
- Work to improve the number and capacity of BME business networks or better connections with existing networks
- Work to promote clearer understanding of regional and sub-regional roles fostering new relationships and mutual learning between the VCS, mainstream services and employers / agencies.

The full report will be produced by the end of June 2007 and will be on the MENTER website. We would like to thank EEDA and all the various participants who helped with the research either through the survey, through stakeholder interviews or through joining focus groups. Involvement with the focus groups was one of the most enjoyable parts for MENTER as it helped us meet members, discuss issues and stimulate our thinking on how we can play a part in addressing issues. The Inclusion report will be central to a new, refreshed MENTER Business plan for the next three years. MENTER will be evaluated by an independent consultant this summer and the findings of this evaluation will also be used to shape the Business Plan. If you would like to feed your views to the evaluator, please contact the MENTER office.

Project appraisal training in Hertfordshire

By Moreen Pascal, MENTER Hertfordshire Strategic Development Consultant

Members of the Investing in Communities (IiC) Hertfordshire Equality and Diversity Group and Steering Committee undertook Bid Appraisal training to enable us to take part in any future appraisal panels. The training was delivered by Paul Teevan who has been delivering this course nationally. The following is a summary of how applicants, particularly from Black and minority ethnic voluntary and community groups can best help themselves to be successful in the appraisal process. Investing in Communities (IiC) is not an open application process, but projects have to be developed through the sub-regional IiC partnership as part of an IiC business plan.

With Paul's help we identified the following shortcomings of applications:

- Lack of precision on who the target market is
- Once the target "market" is clearly identified, applicants do not develop a **reference** case (i.e. if we were to do nothing" scenario) or **base** case (expected level of output for different options – Treasury definition)
- Emphasis of "need" over "demand" when both are just as important as each other
- Taking mainstream projects and "forcing" them onto a group, and not incorporating their particular difference into project design
- Lack of proper risk assessment including that of partners

How applicants can help themselves:

- Use the following framework - what is the problem- What are the **causes** - How the project best addresses the **causes**
- Use **appendices** to summarise different options
- Use **evidence** and **data** rather than assertions
- Show understanding of issues of market failure. The East of England Development Agency's (EEDA's) interventions are based on two rationales: **market failure** and **social redistribution** and therefore project designs must consider or have outcomes which relate to these rationales.

As appraisers, we have our own obstacles:

- 1 We can get too "hung up" about "**activity**" rather than outcomes/benefits, which could mean really good projects are overlooked as they lack descriptive precision.
- 2 We can be unclear as to whether we are appraising the application or the project.
- 3 Over familiarity with certain bid applicants, which is why drawing appraisors from as wide a field as possible is vitally important in upholding principles of equity and equality of opportunity.

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centre of the Sikh community in the area.

The opening ceremony on Saturday 7th April celebrated the completion and initial use of this landmark building and involved taking the Sikh holy scriptures to the Gurdwara. This was followed by Arti (prayer) and Kirtan (hymn singing) and brief speeches.

The project was instigated in 1999 in commemoration of the 300th anniversary of Sikh baptism and subsequently took five years to plan and three years to build. The Gurdwara, clad in granite and marble stone from India, is built in Sikh traditional style and has been designed by architect Teja Singh Biring, a Sikh, of Calford Seaden. The building is expected to become a notable tourist attraction in Bedford.

The Gurdwara will also become a centre of Sikhism in practice, aiming to give people in the UK, including thousands of school children, and young Sikhs an experience of Sikh cultural heritage. A new Community Centre complex is being developed along side the Gurdwara in service to humanity and a ceremony will be held later in the year to open the whole complex.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

The Equality Act 2006 requires the establishment of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR). It will be a Non-Departmental Public Body and an independent influential champion whose purpose is to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people and protect human rights. The CEHR will take an active role in helping to achieve change to benefit some of the most vulnerable and least well represented people in our society. It will become operational on the 1st October 2007.

Trevor Phillips has been appointed Chair of the CEHR, with Margaret Prosser as Deputy Chair, and Kay Hampton has taken over as Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality. Dr Nicola Brewer has been appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer of the CEHR and several of the committees that will guide and coordinate its work have been formed. It will bring together the work of the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission and the Equal Opportunities Commission – the CEHR is being formed from a merger of these Commissions.

The CEHR will take on all of the powers of the existing Commissions as well as new powers to enforce legislation more effectively and promote equality for all. It will champion the diverse communities that make up modern Britain in their struggle against discrimination. It will also promote awareness and understanding of human rights and encourage good practice by public authorities in meeting their Human Rights Act obligations. New powers to take human rights cases will give a new arrow to the bow of many minorities who suffer discrimination.

The CEHR will cover England, Scotland and Wales. In Scotland and Wales there will be statutory committees responsible for the work of the CEHR.

Draft vision and mission statement for consultation

The following draft vision and mission (in full below) have been out for consultation, which closed on the



Dr Nicola Brewer has been appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer of the CEHR.

25th May 2007.

Our vision

A Britain at ease with all aspects of its diversity, built on fairness and respect for all.

Our mission

The Commission for Equality and Human Rights is the independent advocate for equality and human rights in Britain. The CEHR aims to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people, and promote and protect human rights.

The CEHR will challenge prejudice and disadvantage, and promote the importance of human rights.

The CEHR is a statutory body established under the Equality Act 2006. It will enforce equality legislation on age, disability and health, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender status, and encourage compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998.

The CEHR will work to bring about effective change, using its influence and authority to ensure that equality and human rights remain at the top of agendas for government, employers and society. It will campaign for social change and justice.

The CEHR will act directly and by fostering partnerships at local, regional and national levels. It will stimulate debate on equality and human rights. It will give advice and guidance, including to businesses, the voluntary and public sectors, and also to individuals.

The CEHR will develop an evidence based understanding of the causes and effects of inequality for people across Britain, and will be an authoritative voice for reform.

The results of the consultation will be available this summer. For more information on the CEHR please visit the website at www.cehr.org.uk

James Doubleday
CRE Regional Hub

Engaging young people in the production of a film about faith

MENTER, the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Bedford and Momentum Arts received funding from the Government's Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund for an exciting new project. The project is designed to develop understanding of the different faiths by engaging young people in the production of a film. The film will show the important contributions of faith to individuals and society, as well as help dispel some of the harmful stereotypes

and myths that contribute to racism and hate crime.

Elements of the project will help develop understanding of shared citizenship and participation in local democracy. The project will be based in Bedford and advised by interfaith groups, including the regional East of England Faiths Council and the East of England Faiths Agency. The project is led by the Guru Nanak Gurdwara. For more information please contact Rupinder Bahel, Guru Nanak Gurdwara, 84 Ford End Road, Queens Park, Bedford MK40 4JJ; tel: 07958 601148; email: r_bahel@hotmail.com

Ten Top Tips for ...

Dealing with manipulative behaviour

by Moreen Pascal, Hertfordshire Strategic Development Consultant, MENTER

Getting together with other people is typically the main way in which intentions and ambitions are communicated and hopefully realised, whether we are working in community development, strategic planning, anti-discriminatory or partnership work. Very often we are negotiating for resources, or trying to get a point of view or a counter-perspective across to others in emotionally demanding situations. In order to achieve our personal or organisational aims, our ability to be understood and to understand others is critical to our success. Thus continuous awareness of how our personal behaviour consciously or subconsciously can work for or against us in these interactions is worth developing.

In Assertiveness training, three main categories of social behaviour are identified and contrasted with assertive behaviour - aggressive, manipulative and passive. All of the latter are deemed unassertive and less effective in the long run than assertive behaviour in terms of getting you what you want and getting along with others. I am very much a promoter of assertive behaviour, cultural differences notwithstanding! There is often a misunderstanding of what true assertive behaviour is and so I offer this definition: "the honest expression of one's true feelings without undue anxiety and **without putting self or others down.**" Of all of the behaviours already identified, manipulative behaviour can be the most destructive, negative and tricky to handle effectively if we are not aware of what is going on. Below are ten tips for dealing with manipulative behaviour, so equality and equity are truly respected in all of our dealings with others.

Tip No.1 - Recognise it

So what is manipulative behaviour? Manipulative behaviour is sometimes referred to as Passive-Aggressive or Covert Aggressive Behaviour. The distinguishing trait being it is "indirect" and "covert":

- A manipulator's aggression is not obvious. It is "clever".
- Uses emotion for an end. Works in an underhand way, defiantly.
- Appears to let others choose but always works in its own interest.

Tip No.2 - Understand it and understand yourself..

This spectrum of behaviour encompasses "charming" at one end and "back-stabbing" at the other. This behaviour can be habitual or very consciously used. There might be a resistance to openness or directness due to fear or concern the behaviour might be exposed for what it is:

"All of us have weaknesses and insecurities that a clever manipulator might exploit. Sometimes, we're aware of these weaknesses and how someone might use them to take advantage of us. For example, I hear parents say things like: "Yeah, I know I have a big guilt button." – But at the time their manipulative child is busily pushing that button, they can easily forget what's really going on. Besides, sometimes we're unaware of our biggest vulnerabilities. Manipulators often know us better than we know ourselves. They know what buttons to push, when and how hard. Our lack of self-knowledge sets us up to be exploited." A quote from the book: *In Sheep's Clothing* By George K. Simon

Tip No.3 - Listen to your instincts! Resist being flattered

Have you ever been in an encounter with someone or in a meeting and come out of it and experienced an uneasy feeling that you had just been "made over" i.e. been taken advantage of, but quite unable to put your finger on how exactly? People who manipulate will often use flattery in an inappropriate way, successfully lure you in to a false sense of security and then go in for the kill so to speak.

Tip No. 4 - Be clear - ask directly what they want

If you feel the other person is not being open about their motives, or you are beginning to feel a little uncomfortable with what is being asked or proposed then ask for



clarity or say you are not following them. Being direct is a useful way of cutting through woolliness, unnecessary complexity and intrigue.

Tip No. 5 - Be consistent

Once you have had the courage to express yourself directly and openly, the key is to maintain this stance as a way of resisting being pulled back into being flattered, seduced or mesmerised by impressive sounding statistics etc.

Tip No. 6 - Stand firm! Stand your ground

This tip is like no. 5, but refers specifically to your body language (stance, sitting position, shoulder position etc.) which may be particularly important in an extra difficult situation

Tip No. 7 - Don't smile back – it only encourages it

This refers to your facial expression. Do you look like a pushover?!

Tip No. 8 - Be persistent - Use the broken record

This reminds us all that just because we failed to deal with someone successfully once, we can always try again!

Tip No. 9 - Be aware, be on the lookout...

Manipulative behaviour is around us all the time and sometimes we are the manipulators. It's worth nipping this type of behaviour in the bud, but we can only do this if we are aware of what is going on...

Tip No. 10 - If all else fails... scarper (no seriously!)

Passionate about horses

Aruna Sharma is Sports Equality Manager for MENTER and the Women's Sport Foundation. *(WSF) Her role is to encourage individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and women to take up sport and other physical activities. When she ran into Kiki Maurey, a Black woman, whose passion is horse riding, she couldn't resist interviewing her. If you would like to hear more of Aruna's interviews, please visit www.209radio.co.uk for the Active 209 shows for women and girls in Cambridgeshire. Each month is a different theme including yogaflex, football, cricket and martial arts as well as belly dancing to add to cultural awareness, sports and variety.

Kiki Maurey

Age: 54 years.

Location: Lyndhurst, New Forest, Hampshire.

Sports Area: Equestrian (Western Riding/Specialism: Reining)

Status: Amateur

When did you start horse riding?

I've always been considered sporty, especially as a child when I could run and jump very well but was unable to really develop my talents due to having rickets as a baby. I started getting interested in horses from the ages of 10-11 years. I don't come from a well-to-do background which surprises a lot of people when they hear that I'm passionate about horses. Oddly for a Black child, horses were my very first memory – before I could even walk - I saw them from a pram on the Downs at Bristol and have never forgotten that moment.

It is important to realise that before slaves were shipped from Africa to various destinations, they lived on the land and tended livestock. This is in contrast to what's happened since with Black people here and in the US living a largely urban existence.

What made you take up horse riding rather than any other sport or physical activity?

I love the land, my garden, and really enjoy wildlife. Horses seem to be in my blood and keep me sane when things get stressful. There is still racism in equestrian sport but less so in western riding. Another issue is the expense, and you need to have a relatively good income. We manage by not often having holidays, or eating out, we also forgo lots of other luxuries. I run my own business (www.kikimaurey.com) as an enterprise consultant.

I spent the first 15 years of my life in children's homes, and was then pregnant and married just before my 17th birthday. In those days I had no money but after a few years as a cleaner I was able to buy a very sickly orphan New Forest x Arab foal affectionately known as The Midget. I learned to ride by trial and error and book reading. My daughter and Midget became the best of friends and the two of them would spend hours chatting together when they were little. Midge was put down at 23 due to an incurable bone disease. I was going to give up riding as I too had developed arthritis, but instead got a chance in a million to buy a 6 year old quarter horse called Snippers Soul Rebel or Ché for short. Like Midget he was a beautiful grey and despite being only 14.3hh had a very powerful build as well as a lovely kind intelligent eye.

How many horses do you have?

We have two, one of which I bred myself and my partner who is also Black, rides him. In the past we have entered county shows but to do well we found that we couldn't show our own horse ourselves due to a bit of snobbery and some racist attitudes. We had to hire a handler to enter the horse in hunter young stock classes. One of our best UK youth riders is a young African Caribbean woman who is doing very well in the US and Europe in Western Riding.

When did you enter your first competition and in which event?

I agreed with Ché's previous owners to learn to ride western which was a bit tricky as it was totally new to me. I joined the Western Equestrian Society and attended clinics around the region. Since then we have steadily progressed in a number of western disciplines: Western Riding, Western Pleasure, Trail, Horsemanship and Reining. Every year from April through to September we compete in about 5 or 6 western shows, some of which run over 2-3 days including the Western Equestrian Championships held in Warwickshire. All the western disciplines are absolutely fascinating and require a high level of concentration in both horse and rider, especially Trail (a complicated ground level obstacle course the horse and rider). Ché is bred for this particular discipline and absolutely loves it. It's an exciting but technically and physically a very demanding. Preparing for the show



Kiki Maurey, her partner and their two horses.

season is a year round activity for me, even if I can only ride once or twice a week in the winter because of bad weather.

Are there any barriers within this event which you faced?

Apart from the start-up costs that are similar to any other equestrian discipline, there really aren't any barriers in Western Riding. Everyone is very welcoming – it's a new sport and very exciting. Going to shows is great because we catch up with people we only see on the circuit.

Whilst I manage on a tight annual budget, I readily acknowledge that many BME families can't afford to keep horses even if they wanted to, because of the cost of training, tack, clothing, livery, and transport etc. However, little by little things are beginning to change with more BME people open to the idea that we can compete in different kinds of sports besides athletics and football. I would like to see more young Black women in equestrian sports. If I had money to invest, I would like to do something similar to the Black Farmer in Devon and encourage more inner city kids to understand and enjoy more rural experiences. But the reality is that something has to be 'cool' to be appreciated as a 'good thing' and outside of athletics, the broader sports agenda for BME girls and young women just isn't seen as cool.

What would you suggest to improve these issues?

Perhaps get a debate going in BME communities via community groups, alongside taster days at various sports venues. There also needs to be better engagement of the education and training sectors and other stakeholders to see how cultural issues affect young BME women's attitudes and access to, a range of sports disciplines.

Finally Kiki, what would be your message of motivation to everyone?
 "YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO UNTIL YOU TRY IT".

Volunteering for the RNIB

Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) wants a world in which blind and partially sighted people enjoy the same rights, freedoms, responsibilities and quality of life as people who are fully sighted. This is our vision - what we are all working towards. It will always be at the heart of what we do.

Continuing our vital work wouldn't be possible without the thousands of Volunteers who help us rebuild lives devastated by sightloss through a wide range of activities, from fundraising to providing crucial support by visiting people in their homes.

Volunteers make a real difference to people's lives. They help us campaign for change, raising issues in local and central government. They are also involved more directly, helping people choose one of our 'Talking Books' or assisting with our 'Talk & Support' service, which puts blind and partially sighted people in touch by phone.

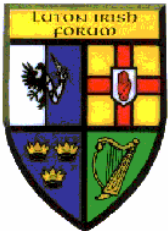
Of course, lots of volunteers also help out by fundraising,

everything from collecting Sooty boxes to parachute jumps.

There are numerous opportunities for people to contribute such as; working in the offices; helping with vacation schemes; mending Braille machines; audio and Braille transcription; driving and much more. Every volunteer is fully trained in Visual Awareness and Customer Care as well as receiving role specific training from their manager. We also pay all out of pocket expenses.

People volunteer for all sorts of reasons. It can help you to gain new skills, enable you to put your experiences to good use, meet new friends and develop new interests. Some volunteers use volunteering as a route to gain employment, other people volunteer as they have spare time to fill. The amount of time given will depend on the role. Some people give a couple of hours a week, others volunteer at certain periods in the year such as school holidays.

If you have a willingness to volunteer and would like to find out more about RNIB's volunteering opportunities, please phone our Volunteering Operations Team on 0845 6030 575 or log onto www.rnib.org.uk/volunteering



Luton Irish Forum

The Luton Irish Forum which has been serving the Irish and other communities in Luton since 1997 marks the tenth anniversary this year. Our fully accessible centre, Kathleen Connolly House, provides the base for a broad portfolio of services aimed at improving welfare and promoting culture for our 600 members.

Our **Welfare and Advice Service**, as part of our wider remit to the local community, provides advice surgeries at community centres and home visits by request. The welfare service has reached an increased number of users year on year and in 2005/06 served over 1000 people from the Irish and other communities. A host of enquiries come the way of the service, including welfare benefits, Irish passports and returning to Ireland. Operating alongside the welfare service is our **Information Development Project** which provides a range of welfare and social information together with educational, health, and art activities. Two of the most popular activities are Keep Fit and Computer classes, together attracting over 30 people per week. Kathleen Connolly House is now accommodating new initiatives, including partnership work with schools, The Internet Café, Dallow Older Men's Club and line dancing. One of our most popular activities is

the **Tuesday Club**. Its 400 members enjoy a variety of social and leisure activities. Activities include weekly social gatherings where members can pop in for tea, Irish soda bread and cake and join in bingo games and a raffle. After relocating, the Tuesday Club became even more popular thanks to the improved access; drawing up to 115 per week! The Forum responded to the need by holding the **Wednesday Club!** The 50 or more members enjoy a range of activities, including 2 games of bingo and a raffle, one to one genealogy sessions, the library (including audio recordings of famous titles), board and card games. The Tuesday and Wednesday Club enjoy an exciting calendar of events, with seasonal outings to the seaside and other places of interest, shows, dances and trips abroad.

In addition to the welfare and information service, celebrating Irish culture is paramount to LIF's ethos. The Forum has just had its 8th **St Patrick's Festival** which is the Eastern Region's largest Irish community event. Luton's biggest and most watched St Patrick's Day parade, to date, together with an action packed Festival itinerary treated in the region of 20,000 spectators. The **LIF Emerald Pipe Band** made their debut performance on St Patrick's Day; playing in full uniform, during the presentation of shamrock to

dignitaries. The Pipe Band which will perform again at the Luton Carnival, are looking for young to old, committed recruits. All members avail of professional tuition. We have formed a steering group to plan a programme of monthly multicultural days, from June. Each day, will feature one of 6 minority ethnic groups including the Irish community. It is envisaged that this project will help break down barriers and promote community cohesion. An increasing number of innovative and diverse cultural and heritage projects will continue to be facilitated and developed in 2007.

LIF has a great working relationship with local agencies such as The Disability Resource Centre, NOAH and Luton Borough Council. We engage in **Partnership Work** with many national agencies including the Federation of Irish Societies, Irish Traveller Movement in Britain, Comhaltas and Citizens Advice Bureau and in Ireland The Department of Social and Family Affairs and The Safe Home Programme.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, trustees, volunteers and members for their exceptional commitment and support towards creating such a vibrant and affective charity. We owe a depth of gratitude for our financial and other support to our many funders, sponsors and supporters.

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Members' Spotlight: KLARS

A befriending scheme, started seven years ago in King's Lynn by members of Churches Together, has grown into a successful advisory service for migrant workers. The road travelled hasn't been always easy and straightforward, tells Louise Heinemann, who is the manager of KLARS.

King's Lynn at the time had seen a bit of a foreign influx and the volunteers from Churches Together soon realised that tea and sympathy alone did not suffice. People also needed advice and help with practical matters such as housing and education. The group decided to start a charity and they also consciously decided that the charity would not be overtly Christian. At the end of 2002 they received a £4K award from Awards for All and in 2003 they received a three year Big Lottery Fund grant which allowed them to set up an office with two full time members of staff. Louise Heinemann, who has a background in overseas aid and was previously working in Lincoln with -mainly African- asylum seekers, was recruited in August 2003.

Louise first concentrated on setting up the office, sourcing computers and ensuring that there was adequate insurance in place, before recruiting the two part time members of staff who were to work as advisers. She soon realised that the holes in the carpet in the new office weren't her biggest challenge. "The project goals were unachievable as there simply weren't enough asylum seekers and refugees." King's Lynn's newspapers might make people believe that the town was flooded with asylum seekers, but since NASS did not provide accommodation locally, the numbers were relatively low and decreased further after May 2004, when the EU expansion meant that many asylum seekers could become migrant workers. The asylum seekers who lived in King's Lynn had deliberately chosen to live in the area, having friends or family, or, possibly, sensing the easy

availability of casual work. Louise: "We (or rather our clients) had the usual hassles with non-working ARC cards, ex-solicitors who didn't forward papers, with going to sign and being deported instead and so on; familiar territory for anyone working with asylum seekers at that time." However, the numbers involved were far less than envisaged by the grant proposal, but the proposal had also mentioned supporting migrant workers, and this proved to be the key to renegotiating the project outcomes.

Louise: "Personally, I did not have any reservations about the change in client group." King's Lynn's asylum seekers were mainly from Eastern Europe and through them, she had already met many Eastern European migrant workers. She was convinced that they needed help too and felt that the role of KLARS, which then stood for King's Lynn Asylum and Refugee Support, was to provide an efficient, professional service to the newcomers in the area. At the advice of the grant officer in Spring 2004 KLARS' constitution was amended, adding migrant workers and their families to the groups of people the organisation planned to assist.

In Spring 2006, when the end of the Big Lottery grant was in sight, Louise started to contemplate another change to reflect the nature of the organisation, in time for the next funding applications. A KLARS member and crossword fanatic provided the new name, timely for the next phase: King's Lynn Area Resettlement Support. In the summer of 2006 Louise successfully secured funding for the next five years, with a bit of a gap in the third year that still needs filling. Louise: "The funding comes from six donors, all of whom know it is for migrant workers. I'm quite proud of that, as none of the donors previously had migrant workers as

a beneficiary category."

Louise would not have been able to achieve this without first having developed KLARS into a professional information and advice organisation which has strong links with its client groups. At the same time as negotiating achievable targets for the first grant, she had prioritised building up baseline data,



Louise Heinemann did not have any reservations about the change in client group.

by developing a monitoring system and database. Initially, it was hard to convince volunteer advisers that filling in the monitoring forms was absolutely essential, but the database now produces detailed statistics on all the requests for help and information which are over a thousand per month, either via the drop-in, or the phone. The database hosts records of over three thousand clients, who can also be anonymous if they wish. It shows the requests for help per category (ie DVLA, utilities), over periods of time, and can also show the contact history of individual clients, evidence that clients have moved on and not become dependent on the service.

KLARS also gained the Community Legal Services Quality Mark and now provides bi-lingual advice at three evening and one day time session in King's Lynn and two sessions in Wisbech. In addition to its three paid bi-lingual advisers, it also maintains a bank of bi-lingual volunteer advisers who help out at the drop-ins and attend monthly training sessions.

KLARS has also branched out in
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other directions. Inna Melnyk started volunteering for KLARS a couple of years ago when she was bored just being at home with a baby. She helped to start a mothers & babies group, and since then got a job at KLARS and initiated many more developments, including building the multilingual website which has over 1,000 visits every month. In January 2004 Louise also started an afterschool club for primary school children, which is still running. Louise, who taught English as a second language, says: "I did know about the need from previous work. It's vital for children to settle down and feel happy, so they can do well and get on at secondary school." At least once a year, KLARS also puts on a multicultural fiesta, to celebrate the town's new and increasing diversity, to help people come together and have fun. This year the festival was on the 21st July.

If all services would be truly accessible there would be no need for KLARS' drop-ins. Louise cannot see this happening in the near future, but if it did, she pictures a more social role for KLARS, for example organising mother-tongue classes for children and luncheon clubs for the elderly. This Louise feels, wouldn't be her, but the clients' decision: "The KLARS Executive currently includes three people from migrant worker groups, and ultimately I hope volunteers and clients will feel KLARS is their organisation, that they run it as well as benefit from it."

www.klarskl.org.uk
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Tel: 07916201729

Last call for Community Champions

The Community Champions Fund is a source of funding from the Department of Education and Skills, which is administered in the East of England by COVER. The aim of the fund is to help individuals who want to change their communities for the better, and can provide awards of up to £2,000 to enable a project to get off the ground.

Unfortunately, the fund is going to close in March 2008. In the meantime, COVER is currently seeking applications to the community champions fund, but any grants given from July 2007 onwards will need to be spent by the beginning of March 2008. For enquiries about the Fund contact: Pam Hinds, Tel: 01799 532880 or email: pam.hinds@cover-east.org

Publish your events on MENTER's website

E-mail your events to
office@mentor.org.uk and we will
publish them on the events pages of
our website (time and staffing
permitting)

Become a School Governor in Essex

Essex Governor Services works with a range of partners to raise awareness of the role of the school governor and to encourage more people from all aspects of the community to volunteer for this key role in the community. Everyone is naturally delighted when there is local interest and we are extremely grateful, for example, to the Black Parent Group in Basildon for their involvement in local recruitment activity.

Being a school governor means being able to help make a very real difference in the way that the community is understood and enabled to support the school. The school and every child benefits from having a governing body which truly reflects the community that it serves, and each and every governor is able to bring their understanding and knowledge to the governing body team as it works with the head teacher to ensure that all the children have a good education both now and in the future. You don't have to have children at the school to be a governor, and the school and Governor Services can give you support and training. Giving an average of six hours a month can be a rewarding way to make a difference in your neighbourhood

If you would like to find out more about becoming a school governor

- Contact your local school,
- Ring Governor Services on 01245 436318, or
- Look at www.essexcc.gov.uk/governors

Heather Leverett
Governor Services Manager

Read more on our website

- As part of the annual Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship "Chance of a Lifetime" awards, John Wroe, Chief Executive of Cambridge based charity, Momentum Arts, has been awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship
- Apply to the University of Cambridge Active Community Fund
- Be Active, Stay Healthy, Have Fun! Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has a new organisation called LIVING SPORT, which aims to get more and more people living active, healthy lifestyles. It is looking for new members;
- www.GuideStar.org.uk, a website that provides detailed information on activities and finances for all registered charities in England and Wales, has announced that it has provided £198m worth of free web presence in its first year.
- Find out about the Dementia Advocacy Network which has a team of experienced dementia advocates and BME outreach workers
- Read about the Akashi project a positive project aiming to explore the increasingly crucial issue of climate change from a variety of cultural and faith perspectives