



# LINK

50 YEARS OF  
**SOCIAL  
ACTIVISM**  
1960-2010

THE VOICE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

# 50 Years On

**2010 will be a significant year for voluntary and community organisations in Kensington and Chelsea. With general and local elections beckoning we will soon have an indication of what the politicians and policy makers have in store for us over the coming years.**

For us here at the Social Council this year will also be significant for other reasons. 2010 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Social Council. A milestone we will be proudly celebrating throughout the year with a special programme of events.

Since 1960 the Notting Hill Social Council and then also its sister organisation the Chelsea Social Council have played a leading role in coordinating local activism and voluntary services. These organisations merged in 2002 to form Kensington & Chelsea Social Council and we hope to maintain their tradition over the next fifty years.

We hope our programme of events will continue to raise the profile of the sector and increase recognition of its work. We also want to raise awareness amongst local organisations of the important issues facing the sector now and in the future.



Participants at WinterFest 2009: Over 60 organisations contributed to the event in December that marked the start of our 50 year birthday celebrations.

We are launching This Is Us, our latest report on the local voluntary and community sector (see back page) and amongst the special events we will be hosting in 2010 will be an election hustings allowing us to quiz local candidates on their plans to work with the voluntary sector. We will be continuing our 'walkabouts' to introduce new workers in the borough's voluntary and statutory sector to the work of some local organisations. As well as hosting seminars on equality and cohesion and child poverty and taking part in voluntary sector fairs in Golborne and Worlds End.

We hope to make our annual funding fair, FundingLink, a bigger and better event this year by hosting it in partnership with our colleagues from Hammersmith and Fulham and we are in the

early stages of planning a celebratory dinner and awards ceremony to round off the year. This aims to recognise the achievements of our local organisations.

We hope 2010 is a fruitful year for you all and we look forward to working you.

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### Kensington & Chelsea Social Council (KCSC)

works to support locally focused voluntary and community organisations serving local residents.

The views expressed in Link are not necessarily those of KCSC.

## A WORD FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### Welcome to the first Link of 2010 in which we celebrate 50 years of our sector's positive local presence and take a look at new approaches to Equalities.



Mary Gardiner

This sector developed to fight poverty and disadvantage and this remains a core value of most groups. However, whilst we continue to speak with and for disenfranchised communities and act as a watchdog, monitoring what is happening to those groups locally there is now a greater emphasis on us proving our value.

Sometimes we are too busy to prove the quality of what we do and statutory officers do not always recognise our strengths. We have to really consider why we exist and if we take public money, we have to demonstrate how we use it to make a difference.

Other threats we face relate to the recession and some are a result of the way the Local Development Framework is being promoted.

At KCSC we think we need to challenge the local response to the recession and also the way that planners respond to the views of residents. We think both of these issues relate to future of community life locally.

I am pleased to say that the local voluntary and community sector reps were in agreement in their response to the way that proposed grant reductions by the

councils Corporate Service department were decided. We made it clear that we would have appreciated a more collaborative approach at some point in the process.

We hope to make funders understand

that we defend services to ensure that the residents we serve have a way of coping with and responding to change through trusted and understood relationships.

In recognition of the importance of campaigning and to improve our standing and influence Sofia Roupakia has taken on a new role as a Campaigning Officer. We hope to secure extra funds to support this work helping the sector find its lobbying and campaigning voice. Additionally Aneesa Chaudhury has rejoined the staff team on a part time basis to support our work around the Personalisation Agenda.

Another key task we have set ourselves is strengthening Governance amongst local groups. We now offer support through a trustee network and mentoring to trustees and senior workers. Take advantage of this whilst you can because our sector needs to get its house in order before the next wave of reductions is announced.

In the coming year we plan to work on strengthening relations between larger and smaller groups. All local leaders should consider how they work together with colleagues and how collectively we can reduce local poverty and disadvantage.

## Get involved in the Golborne Festival!

We are looking for North Kensington organisations to run activities at this summer's Golborne Festival. If you want to have fun and showcase your work we want to hear from you now.

The festival runs on Sunday 20 June 12pm - 6pm

More info: Kuldip Bajwa

kuldip@kcsc.org.uk

020 7243 9804

# EQUALITIES

## TIMES HAVE MOVED ON... OR HAVE THEY?

**It is an unfortunate fact that despite the introduction of equalities legislation over the past 40 years, discrimination and inequality still exists and it afflicts the lives of many people in our society.**

Over the years laws like the Race Relations Act which was introduced in the 1960's have aimed to protect the rights of the individual and promote equal treatment. More recently, the 2009 Equality Bill was introduced to strengthen the laws on equality and bring in new measures to fight discrimination.

Despite these advances, evidence shows that people from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background are less likely to find work than those from a white background and despite a 2.2% narrowing in the employment gap between BME and white people since 1997, it still stands at 15.7%.

If you are a woman you are likely to be paid less than your male counterpart, with men earning over 22% more an hour than women. If you are disabled you are twice as likely to be unemployed as a non disabled person.

The Government Equalities Office stated in the 2008 White Paper **Framework for a Fairer Future** that: *"If progress is not made then the pay gap between men and women will not close until 2085 and it will take almost 100 years for people from BME backgrounds to get the same job prospects as white people".*

Equality is also about attitudes and behaviour and everyone having the same opportunities to get their voices heard, feel like they belong and feel part of a structure which can influence decisions that impact upon their lives.

We know that the current political system at local and national level does not adequately reflect British society and whilst there has been some work by the government to try and redress the balance, more

***"Equality is also about attitudes and behaviour and everyone having the same opportunities to get their voices heard, feel like they belong and feel part of a structure which can influence decisions that impact upon their lives."***

needs to be done to encourage women and people from BME backgrounds to become Members of Parliament and local Councillors.

Local Councils must also work to improve employment opportunities for people from equalities groups, particularly at senior management level. The 2009 Equality Bill will impact on Councils as employers, requiring them to publish details of pay differentials between men and women. Proposals are also being put forward to publish the employment rates for BME people and disabled people.

### Equality Impact Assessments

One part of equality legislation stipulates that all Councils are required to carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA). These are tools used to identify the potential impact of a policy, service or function on residents or Council staff. An EqIA must be conducted as soon as a new policy or change to a policy, function or service is considered, it is a necessary part of the decision making process within policy development.

EqIAs are a legal requirement and it is important that a Council should fully assess how a policy decision will impact on a range of equality target groups before the policy is implemented. The process of carrying out an assessment requires a full and proper consultation with members of the community. It is important that the needs and the barriers that equality groups face are understood and taken into account as part of the process.

EqIAs are public documents and should be available for any member of the public to read.

**EQUALITY AND COHESION SEMINAR – 19 May 2010, 5-7pm.**

Unpick the equality issues that face groups and look at ways in which all communities can work together to achieve better outcomes.

[www.kcsc.org.uk/seminars](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/seminars)

# Equalities – what

**Equality is about providing people with equal opportunities and organisations this needs to be considered both in the workplace**

## How can you make sure equalities are embedded in your organisation?

It is good practice for organisations to have in place a policy to clearly show their commitment to equal opportunities. This should be monitored and reviewed |to check that it is being implemented and ideally an action plan should also be in place.

Many voluntary and community organisations have a written policy in place but are equalities really embedded? Here are some questions to get you thinking about equalities for your services users:

- Are the venues that you use for your activities fully accessible and welcoming to all?
- Do you ask your users for feedback on whether your services meet their needs?
- Do you review, and if necessary adapt, your services in response to the diverse needs of your services users?
- Is the information and publicity you produce easily accessible and understood by different users?
- Are there any people in your target group that use your services less than others? Do you know why that is? Maybe there are ways to make your services more open, accessible and welcoming. Think about location, costs, timing, food etc.
- Do you involve users in shaping the work that you do? Are there ways you can reach out more to users that often do not get involved?
- Is your board representative of the communities that use your services? Are there ways you can make efforts to make it more representative?

It is also important to be aware of equalities as an employer and your obligations under the law. It is unlawful to discriminate against people at work because of someone's sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, age or because of a disability (including mental illness). It is also unlawful to discriminate because of pregnancy, childbirth, or maternity leave, because a person is a member or non-member of a trade union or because they are part-time workers or on a fixed term contract.



## Some definitions

**Direct Discrimination** is when you treat someone less favourably than others for unlawful means, for example not employing someone because of their gender or disability.

**Indirect Discrimination** is when an employer has a policy, practice or procedure that applies to everyone but might disadvantage a particular group, and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment.

# you need to know!

challenging discrimination. For voluntary and community and also in the delivery of services.



## of discrimination

**Victimisation** is when you treat someone less favourably or discriminate against them because they have pursued or intend to pursue their rights relating to alleged discrimination.

**Positive discrimination** is unlawful in the UK. It implies applying different criteria for selection to representatives of different groups as a way of addressing the existing social inequalities.

**Positive action** to address imbalances in the workforce is allowed in particular circumstances. Examples would include setting equality targets (but not quotas which are unlawful); encouraging people from particular groups to apply where they are under-represented; training for promotion or skill training.

### Further resources

#### The Big Lottery

Good practice guide specifically for voluntary and community organisations called Equality Matters.

*More info:* [www2.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/about-uk/equalities/equality\\_matters.htm](http://www2.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/about-uk/equalities/equality_matters.htm)

#### Equality and Human Rights Commission

Information, advice and guidance about equality and human rights.

*More info: Helpline* 0845 604 6610  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

#### Sample Equal Opportunities Policy

The London Voluntary Service Council have a model equal opportunities policy and action plan. This also comes with guidance including a summary of legislation for employers.

*More info:* [www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?NodeID=90186](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?NodeID=90186)

## TARGET HR PROJECT

This new project aims to provide in-depth support to improve policies, procedures and to develop knowledge of employment law and management. It will allow around 10 local small and medium organisations to:

- Receive one-to-one support, from a HR Adviser with voluntary sector experience.
- Increase knowledge and skills through training and volunteering.
- Be signposted to resource materials tailor-made for the voluntary sector.
- Access dedicated websites and an electronic network in order to develop mutual support with other participants.
- Learn how to sustain good practice in the future.

*More info:* [www.kcsc.org.uk/news#targethr](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/news#targethr)

# Local voluntary sector to play a key role in healthcare

**NHS Kensington & Chelsea is developing an innovative new plan for health services, to coincide with the opening of two new primary care facilities, one at St Charles Hospital and one at Hogarth Road in Earls Court in 2010. The 'polysystem' model aims to offer local people much more flexibility in services, with professionals working together in an integrated way, to deliver a more holistic approach to patient care.**

Mark Creelman, the Director of Commissioning at NHS Kensington & Chelsea met with local voluntary organisations in December, and has presented the voluntary sector with an exciting challenge – to work with the local NHS to develop and deliver the polysystem model.

Kensington & Chelsea Social Council is building a consortium of local organisations that will be involved in various ways, both during the design phase over the next few months, and in being part of the service delivery. This is exciting for local organisations that

have an interest in health because it puts us right in the heart of mainstream healthcare provision.

An 'Open Space' event on 11 February will bring people with an interest in being part of this together to start to develop this opportunity.

More information about the polysystem model, the local consortium and the 'Open Space' method are on the Social Council website.

More info: **Lev Pedro**

**020 7243 9809**

[www.kcsc.org.uk/health](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/health)

## NEW TRAINING OPPORTUNITY – Mental Well-Being Awareness

One in four of us will be affected by mental illness at some point in our lives.

Only about 20% of people who have a mental illness seek help.

How would you respond to a member of your community or organisation who may have mental health support needs?

This 2-day workshop will give insight and knowledge about stigma and attitudes to common mental health conditions, as well as information about how to find appropriate local support services and make referrals.

The 4Minds project is focusing on the needs of black and ethnic minority (BME) communities, but anyone from any local voluntary organisation, community group, or anyone interested in developing their awareness and knowledge in this area is welcome to attend.

More info: **4Minds**

**020 7373 9113**

[info@4mindsproject.org.uk](mailto:info@4mindsproject.org.uk)

[www.4mindsproject.org.uk](http://www.4mindsproject.org.uk)



### Training dates in 2010

- Thursday 25 & Friday 26 February
- Friday 19 & Friday 26 March
- Friday 21 & Friday 28 May
- Friday 23 & Friday 30 July
- Friday 17 & Friday 24 September
- Friday 19 & Friday 26 November

## BME Health Forum

The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Health Forum brings together local community groups and voluntary organisations that are interested in equality in healthcare to network, share ideas and to campaign for better services. In recent years, the Forum has researched issues such as access to primary care, male infant circumcision, and inequalities in NHS dentistry, and produced reports highlighting actions for change.

The forum steering group has been talking to local community organisations about their priorities, and

this will be the basis for the Forum's three-year strategy 2010-13.

### Quarterly meeting dates for 2010:

- |                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| ● Wednesday 24 March     | 12.30 - 3.30pm |
| ● Wednesday 23 June      | 12.30 - 3.30pm |
| ● Wednesday 22 September | 12.30 - 3.30pm |
| ● Wednesday 15 December  | 12.30 - 3.30pm |

More info:

[www.kcsc.org.uk/healthpartnerships](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/healthpartnerships)

# End Child Poverty Campaign

During 2010 the **Children, Young People and Families VOF** will be leading on the local End Child Poverty Campaign. Kensington and Chelsea is ranked 17th in London in terms of addressing child poverty. Under the banner of "Mind The Gap", the campaign will incorporate a number of different strands and will include particular requests, such as the reintroduction of school uniform grants for low income and unwaged households. It will also seek to bring together

the many difficult projects and initiatives being delivered by the sector across the borough designed to combat child poverty.

More info or to sign up:

[sofia@kcsc.org.uk](mailto:sofia@kcsc.org.uk)

## MIND THE GAP!

### New Equalities Bill and its impact on the voluntary and community sector

The new Equalities Bill creates a single public sector duty that covers all equality strands. The legislation to which the Duty applies includes central government, local authorities, all statutory agencies and any private sector body delivery a public function. RBKC currently achieves a rating of '4 stars' in equality but is aiming to achieve 'Excellent' by 2012. The Council will be consulting with the voluntary and community sector on revision of their Equality Scheme early in the year.

### Disability Network

The **Disability Net** provides organisations and service providers the opportunity to hear the views of disabled people, engage in discussion and look at strategic issues. In January, the Network met with a panel of key RBKC staff including Councillors and senior management to discuss social care and personal budgets.

More info: [Kate Pieroudis](mailto:Kate.Pieroudis@adkc.org.uk) or [Jamie Renton](mailto:Jamie.Renton@adkc.org.uk) 0208 960 8888  
[policy@adkc.org.uk](mailto:policy@adkc.org.uk)

## News from the Voluntary Organisations Forums

### Election to Borough Voluntary Organisation Advisory Group

The **Main VOF** elected Abdalla Salim to the Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group (BVOAG) as the representative for organisations working with BME communities. Currently, Volunteer Coordinator for Helping Hands Support Association, Abdalla has been involved in the voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea for almost eight years and received the Volunteer of the Year Award in 2009.

### 2009 Under Review

The December 2009 meeting of the **Main VOF** reviewed the successes and challenges for the voluntary and community sector throughout the year. Main achievements continue to be around the provision of high quality, cost effective and efficient

services during what are undoubtedly challenging times. The Forum identified the impact of the recession and funding cuts to be the areas of most concern over the coming year and agreed that new and innovative ways of meeting shortfalls to maintain services need to be identified.

### Day opportunities for older people in Kensington & Chelsea

The **Older Peoples VOF** continues to work with the Council on the review of day opportunities for older people across the borough. The review seeks to ensure that people aged 50+ can access meaningful activities, day opportunities, education and employment services. The Council has sought input from a wide cross section of service providers with a view to ensuring the diverse needs of the borough's residents are met.

## DIARY DATES

Wednesday 3 February	10.00am to 12.00pm	Engaging Communities VOF
Wednesday 24 February	9.45am to 1.00pm	Main VOF
Wednesday 3 March	10.00am to 12.30pm	Children, Young People & Families VOF
Monday 26 April	3.00pm to 5.00pm	Older People's VOF

Information on all meetings, including venue details, minutes and agendas, can be found on our website at [www.kcsc.org.uk/vof](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/vof)

**This year as part of our 50 years celebration we will be using our Spotlight section to focus on the history of our local sector and some of its organisations.**

Souad Talsi is the founder of Al-Hasaniya, an organisation based in North Kensington serving the needs of Moroccan and Arabic Speaking women and their families. Here she talks about its development and the changes she has seen in the voluntary sector over the years.

**How did Al Hasaniya came about?**

Al Hasaniya started as a project within the Moroccan Co-ordinating Committee, the MCC, an organisation set up in 1985 to support the Moroccan community in North Kensington. We quickly became independent and have been serving the needs of Moroccan and Arabic speaking women ever since.

**Has the mission changed over time?**

Our ethos of bridging the gap between Moroccan and Arabic speaking women and service providers remains the same, as has our dedication to being the mouthpiece for these women. We continue to advocate on their behalf and ensure good service delivery is tailor made to their needs by continuously having a dialogue with our user involvement group.

**Looking back have you seen many changes in the sector?**

I've seen pressure for the voluntary organisations to act more like businesses and this concerns me, I think there is a danger that the quality of voluntary sector services will suffer. Spending more time producing reports and ticking boxes will no doubt affect the quality of direct service delivery to those who need it most.

**Have you seen changes in regards to groups working together?**

That's one of the changes that I like, funders put pressure on groups to work in partnership and that's fantastic because it eliminates duplication. In the olden days you had groups doing exactly the same



The opening of Al-Hasaniya in 1991. Souad Talsi is third from the left.

work and not being aware of each other. A good example of linking such groups in my view is the Social Council; it is spider web that brings everybody together, they are forever linking groups and doing a fabulous job. The WinterFest proved this.

**Do you think the relationship with the statutory sector has changed over time?**

Yes, it's become much more businesslike and we have had to become like business managers. I think the distance is growing between the local authority and the voluntary sector and the people we are trying to serve because of the increase in bureaucracy. Dealing with councils generally, has now become very formal and the structures are much more complex; putting small organisations within the BME communities at a huge disadvantage at times. However, on the positive side I do think we are fortunate to be in Kensington and Chelsea, as the council does go the extra mile to target those hard to reach groups and they do listen.

**Is the recession having any impact on your organisation?**

No. 9/11 had an impact, as an Arabic speaking organisation we felt the difference and it became harder to get funds at the time. Now it's the opposite, provided such organisations go along with the Government's policies on preventing extremism, which is not always well thought of.

**50 YEARS OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM 1960-2010**

**This Is Us REPORT OUT NOW**

The follow up to State of the Sector is a comprehensive study of the voluntary and community sector in Kensington and Chelsea, the services we deliver, where we get our money from and what we do with it, our influence, and what the future holds for us.

Get your copy: [www.kcsc.org.uk/stateofthesector](http://www.kcsc.org.uk/stateofthesector)

