

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM



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Newsletter: Issue Eight — August 2009

CECF Introduction

Recent events on the British political landscape, as well as unfortunately in Cambridge, bring to mind a campaign some years ago of the then Commission for Racial Equality. It had the title 'All different All Equal'. It sought to highlight in a positive way the diversity of UK Society whilst promoting the values of equality & tolerance that should exist between individuals & communities. The Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum is in an ideal position to promote those ideals, indeed one of our key principles is to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups in the City of Cambridge and surrounding area, so through our work we will continue to strive to do this.

Reported by Eddie Stadnik
Development Officer

Development

Development work has been continuing apace in recent weeks & months with CECF taking an active role in working with and promoting the group development training for BME groups offered through the Cambridge Council For Voluntary Service (CCVS). In addition Community surgeries have been held at the forum for the Cambridge African Network, Cambridge Bangladeshi 'Shahajalal Community House' and the Cambridge Malayalee Association & the Kerala 'Vanithaka'. Meetings have been held with statutory organisations, as well as agencies & groups in the voluntary sector. Developing partnerships with the Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire Racial Equality Diversity Service & Police through City Council Cohesion meetings. Cambridgeshire County Council through the Multi-Agency Forum known as the Migrant Worker & Refugee Network. More recently I have been attending and playing an active part in the South Cambridgeshire District Council 'Equalities Consultative Forum'. A major part of their work revolves around Gypsy and Travellers issues.

So far our Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support (CRMS) Project has assisted over 200 clients with a range of issues including asylum welfare support, refugee integration issues, English Language tuition & immigration advice. The Immigration Advisory Service (IAS) surgeries have had to be increased due to demand. This particular service has been a big success not only for the project, but has served the wider BME communities as well. More specific information about the CRMS project is included in the newsletter.

(continued on page 2)

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CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Development Continued

I have been in negotiation with the Cambridgeshire NHS Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) and in the coming weeks they will have a drop in surgery at the forum which will be of benefit to all the communities we serve (See Health News). Recently we launched our new website which will continue to be developed over the coming months. Our projects and services are highlighted and we would like to encourage BME community groups to inform us of any activities or events that they might like to be put on the website. Currently we are also redesigning our old CECF publicity brochures.

Finally in recent months discussions and planning has started to take place through the Board of Trustees on how we at CECF can better serve the needs of the wider BME communities. The vision of a Cambridge Ethnic Parliament has emerged. When successfully converted into reality it will give a more effective voice and strengthen cohesion amongst the ever growing and diverse ethnic minority communities, living and working in the City and surrounding villages. We will bring you news as this develops.

Reported by Eddie Stadnik
Development Officer

Cambridge Racial Incidents Support Project (CRISP)

CRISP continues to support clients in relation to employment, housing, local police and education issues. Making more progress with mediation and representation for clients with 2 organisations in the private sector.

CRISP has raised questions in regard to a client receiving conflicting advice from 2 representatives from the same advice organisation - this may have consequences in regard to training but also raises the issue of how many other community members have been given the wrong advice.

Progress so far

- CRISP is now a member of the Employment Law Association
- A report has been submitted to the City Council on the need for the CRISP project.
- Two funding applications have been submitted. If the funding applications are successful, then I am proposing to amend CRISP operating hours for client casework.
 - Suggested Operating Times:
Tuesday/Thursday: 2pm - 8pm
Saturday: 10am - 1pm

These proposals are to enable community members to access advice after normal opening hours, so they do not have to take time off work for example. Please feedback to me your thoughts on the proposal.

Future Training Opportunities

I am proposing to arrange training on Equality and Diversity issues starting in September - if you would like to receive further details please contact me

CRISP needs Volunteers

Are you interested in helping people in your community? CRISP are looking for volunteers to help clients and with administration. All volunteers will receive training (vocational and accredited). If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please contact me for more details.

Reported by Tony Lindsay
CRISP Officer

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM



Forum Field Project



Since February 2009, a lot more progress has been made at the allotment. After a delayed delivery of the shed and with help of a volunteer, the time consuming set up of the shed took well over a weekend to complete. It was very important to get the shed installed, not only for storage purpose but more so to keep our tools safe, because concerned plot holders had already mentioned that implements were going missing. I have since replaced some of the missing equipment and provided additional implements, which were necessary for the ease of day-to-day working on the allotment. New equipment provided were a set of spades, forks, rake, trowel and hoe, a First Aid Kit, kneeling pad, sets of gloves, seceters and some folding chairs. I have also placed a logbook in the shed for plot holders not only to register their visits, but to provide any other comments. This will not only serve as a record usage of the allotment, but also will help me to assess the outputs.

One of the initiatives, I have tried to implement was a monthly social activity, unfortunately, one social activity had to be cancelled due to dull weather.

- Sunday 17 May 2009 - 3pm - 5pm - at the Nuffield allotment site
- Saturday 13 June 2009 - 6pm onwards - at the Nuffield allotment site
- Saturday 18 July 2009, Forum Field, 6pm onwards - 6 months anniversary (cancelled)



It is hard to believe that more than 6 months have passed since I was asked to lead this project, but as you will see from the development pictures below, the hard work put in by many plot holders is bearing fruit! I am very proud of everybody for all their efforts and I hope that this will continue for the remainder of the contract.

Some of the original volunteer plot holders pulled out for varying reasons. I am currently best looking at allotting the remaining plots (from a large waiting list of applications) operating within the spirit of equal opportunities and allocating out on a first come first-served basis, without preferential treatment.

Having deciding to also to take up one of the plots mainly with a view to create a communal area, where all the plot holders can gather during our planned socials. I managed to rope my family to help me (mainly my mother) and am very proud of the way it has turned out. I still have many ideas for further development and I hope other plot holders will also take an interest to make this a nice space for socials.

I was impressed how a change in weather can have a major effect on the growth of the vegetation in the allotment compared to the vegetation in a garden. The soil in the allotment is so rich, that with a little rain there is sudden growth of every type of plant, and if you are not careful then weeds will soon overrun your plot. I found this out to my amazement when the first heavy rain in June came, there were knee high weeds, it seemed like a scene from 'Indiana Jones'. So a lot of work had to be done, especially when it rained, but in the last few weeks (as you will see in the development pictures below), there have been some very promising results, with fresh vegetables and flowers blooming.

The plans for the future are to hold a few more socials, including an "Allotment party" with board members and an 'Awards ceremony'. There will be a lot more harvesting until October, which is when the contract ends, but depending on the feedback from the current plot holders, there maybe an opportunity to continue this project again next year and beyond.

I would like to thank all the plot holders for their hard work and helping to show how we as a community can come together through this excellent initiative from CECF and literally enjoy the fruits of our labour.



Reported by Mitesh Patel
Project Support Officer

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Community and Cohesion News

The Akashi Project

They are delighted that the government body, "Faiths in Action", have awarded them funding for an exciting new project bringing together individuals and groups from different religious backgrounds around the issue of climate change.

They will be working with people from all the major faiths in Cambridge to organise workshops on climate change. Then towards the end of the year, there will be two interfaith gatherings, where then in March 2010 a festival will be celebrated.

There will be a need for lots of people to take part! So if you are part of a faith group based in Cambridge, and would like to get involved, then please contact the Project Co-ordinator, Siobhan Mellon on via E-mail: Siobhan@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org or Mobile: 0789 6730922.

Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network (LINK)

Cambridgeshire LINK is looking for more members to join onto their network. Becoming a member of LINK will give you the opportunity to influence local health and social care services. It was set up to help make sure the people in Cambridgeshire get the health and social care services they need, and anyone can get involved.

If you are interested in becoming a member or for more information, contact Cambridgeshire LINK by writing to: Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network, Freepost RRXK-BLAT-XZKG, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 5EB. Or call them on Tel: 0300 3651245 (local) or Tel: (01480) 465316 or Email: office@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk or via the Website: www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk.



Health News



Cambridgeshire NHS Primary Care Trust

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

As a patient, relative or carer sometimes you may need to turn to someone for prompt help, advice and support. This is where PALS can help you.

Service Aims

- Offer prompt, confidential help & advice to resolve problems quickly about the NHS care providers by:
 - GPs, dentists, pharmacists, opticians
 - Community services (e.g. local clinic, health visitors, district nurses, etc.)
 - Local Community hospital services
- Signpostin service to Acute hospitals
- Help contact other organisations who offer advice, including independent advocacy services
- Listen to our patients, carers and relatives, to improve patient care
- Provide information about local health services and support groups
- Give guidance on how to access the NHS Complaints Procedure

Drop-in surgeries will be held at the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum on the following dates:

Wednesday 23/09/09, 9:30am - 12:30pm

Wednesday 25/11/09, 9:30am - 12:30pm

Wednesday 28/10/09, 9:30am - 12:30pm

Wednesday 23/12/09, 9:30am - 12:30pm

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Health News (continued)



Cambridgeshire Childcare Information Service at Opportunity Links

Opportunity Links holds essential core details of all registered early years childcare provision in the area, and take steps to ensure this information is as up to date and accurate as possible.

For more information to access their service go to their Website: www.opportunity-links.org.uk.

Crescent Trust Care Services Ltd (24-hour Domiciliary Care Service)

They are a care company, which is fully registered with Care Quality Commission for provision of care services on domiciliary basis. Services are available on a live-in basis and are suitable for adults over the age of 18, requiring care and who wish to carry on living in their homes.

Care operatives are highly trained to care for the elderly and people with special conditions. Generally the assignment periods are of 2 weeks minimum with a competitively priced service of below £4/hour and are focused on providing a quality service to all clients in a sensitive and friendly manner.

For more information contact them via Tel: (01638) 778519 or Email: info@crescent-trust.co.uk and check them out via their Website: www.crescent-trust.co.uk

NHS Cambridgeshire – Community Rehabilitation for Cambridge City & South Cambridgeshire

They would like to announce of the changes made to the way that people in Cambridgeshire are able to access community rehabilitation services, according to last year's public consultation:

- The NHS can help as many people as possible to regain their independence
- The NHS have a range of options available to meet people's individual needs
- Patients get the rehabilitation that they need in a setting that will achieve the best possible outcomes for them

For more information about this or to get hold of their information leaflet, please contact Susan Osborne (Executive Nurse) or Jane Crawford-White (Community Rehabilitation Business Manager) on NHS, Heron Court, Ida Darwin, Fulborn, Cambridge, CB21 5EE.

Cambridge City Council Independent Living Services (CCCILS)

If you are over 60, CCCILS can give you advise on:

1. Housing available to your needs
2. Financial benefits & Personal alarms
3. Other services citywide that may of interest
4. Support in finding help in your own home
5. Social activities, who share your interests
6. Help to find the right people and enjoy your life and independence

For more information, contact Tracey on Tel: (01223) 458004

Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network (LINK)

Since the launch of the LINK, a Work Group has been set up to concentrate on issues relating to patients with mental health needs. This group wishes to develop an appropriate work programme by finding out from service users, carers and organisations the issues facing people using mental health services. This can be services provided by either health or social care organisations. They would therefore be grateful if you could contact Kim Armitt (Cambridgeshire LINK Facilitator) via

Email: kim.armitt@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk or Tel: (01480) 465362 or follow through their Website: www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Training and Volunteer News



EssayAssay can provide you or your organisation low cost, high quality copyediting, correspondence and academic writing assistance

Graham Roberts is the CEO for EssayAssay, which is specifically established to help those from a BME background, to become more effective communicators in the professional world.

If you need help with any of the following:

- CV, Cover Letter or Job Application Writing
- Official correspondence - i.e. resolving disputes or making enquiries of utility companies or service providers
- General letter writing
- Essay or academic writing
- Proofreading

Please feel free to browse the EssayAssay website (www.essayassay.com) or contact Graham Roberts direct on graham.roberts@essayassay.com for a no obligation enquiry/quotation.

209radio

209radio is a Community Radio stations, which essentially means that it is owned and operated by the communities they serve. Heavily dependent on volunteers and run on a non-profit basis, they aim to provide training and access to the media for those who might find it difficult to get their voices heard elsewhere. They are a new '3rd tier' in UK broadcasting, adding to the existing services provided by commercial operators and the BBC. Their content varies a great deal across the country and within stations themselves. You are guaranteed to come across something you will like and to discover something new!

209radio on 105 FM is committed to providing community access to the airwaves, and to offering diverse programming that reflects the needs and interests of Cambridge. They also carries advertising and sponsorship; as well as you gaining volunteer experience in sales and ad production whilst helping to support the work of this Registered Charity. They intend to provide more training schemes as the project grows.

Examples of some shows featured are:

- SOUL DISCOVERY - Soul & rare groove presented by Mick O'Donnell (<http://souldiscovery.209radio.co.uk>)
- POLISH WAVES - Keep up to date with local Polish news and events (<http://polishwaves.209radio.co.uk>)
- 105 BREAKFAST - Wake up with 209 every morning from 7-9am! (<http://breakfast.209radio.co.uk>)

Please contact the station for more information: 209radio is local, non-profit and volunteer powered. Tel: (01223) 488 418, Fax: (01223) 488 419, Mobile: 07968 898254, Web: www.209radio.co.uk. To get involved as a volunteer, contact us via E-mail: getinvolved@209radio.co.uk. Tell us about your news: newsdesk@209radio.co.uk or write to 209radio Ltd, Citylife House, Sturton Street, Cambridge, CB1 2QF

Oakington Friends Group (OFG)

Volunteers required to visit men detained at Oakington Immigration Centre

Could you befriend detainees, who often come from harrowing situations, with no friends or relatives to visit them, facing an uncertain future, and possible deportation? OFG offer training sessions - the next one is planned for October - and ongoing support to visitors. For more information please contact Kathleen English on Tel: (01223) 440781 or Jenny Turner on Tel: (01223) 350563.

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Events

University of Cambridge – “Open Cambridge Weekend 2009”

11/09/09 – 13/09/09, various times and venues in and around Cambridge

Open Cambridge is a weekend of free tours, talks and open access for families, local residents and local community groups. If you would like to do the following in Cambridge:

- Explore the spectacular architecture, fantastic art collection and beautiful gardens that lie behind University and College walls
- Attend a series of talks on the history of the University and Colleges
- The 4.5 mile Bridge the Gap Charity Walk by visiting nine College grounds and raise money for Arthur Rank Hospice Charity and Press Relief, the News Community Fund

All Friday and Saturday events are free of charge and tickets for Bridge the Gap charity walk are £8 (advance) or £14 on the day and free for under 16 years old.

If you have any queries regarding the festival, contact Jo McPhee or Sophie Smith on Tel: (01223) 766766 or Email: opencambridge@admin.cam.ac.uk or go to Website: www.cam.ac.uk/opencambridge.

**Festival
of Ideas**



University of Cambridge – “Festival of Ideas”

21/10/09 – 01/11/09, various locations in Cambridge

The Festival, celebrates the arts, humanities and social sciences and drew over 5,000 people in its first year in 2008. The aim is to open up the University, during the University's 800th anniversary, to the public and inspire people to learn more about the ideas in arts, humanities and social sciences, which have shaped and are shaping the world.

There are an exciting number of lectures and debates, which will take place given by Dame Julia Neuberger, Sheikh Michael Mumisa, Dr. Glen Randwala, to name a few. As well as debates there will be lectures, conferences, artwork and children's events. These include:

- A plant orchestra - artist Luke Jerram will amplify the imperceptible sound waves of plants in the Botanic Garden
- An evening with award-winning political cartoonist Steve Bell
- New research on the personal stories of migrant workers in the East of England
- A Day in the Life of a Medieval Muslim
- And many more...

For more information, contact Mandy Garner, Communications Officer at Email: mjq209@admin.cam.ac.uk or Tel: (01223) 339671 or go to Website: www.cambridgefestivalofideas.org.

Cultural Experiences of Cambridge Residents

01/10/09, 1pm – 4pm, Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre

As part of the Cambridgeshire celebrates Age Programme, the Broaden Your Horizons project will be hosting an event, which will include presentations, information about people who live in Cambridge that have different cultural backgrounds and experiences. Also there will be free food from around the world available to nibble on.

If you are part of a group that would like to offer a presentation, or you would like to attend, please call Binnie Pickard (Community Development Officer on Tel: (01223) 508149 or post your request for tickets to Buchan Street Neighbourhood Centre, 6 Buchan Street, Cambridge, CB4 2XF. or

Email: binnie.pickard@cambridge.gov.uk.

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Events (continued)

Indian Community and Culture Association – In aid of Bhavan Refurbishment. Japanese contemporary dance “Butoh” and Indian classical music recital

09/08/09, Workshop: 7.45 pm - 8.45 pm & Recital: 9.00 pm - 10.00 pm, Bharat Bhavan

To attend Workshop (£10.00), Recital (£ 8.00) or Workshop + recital (£15.00), including a light meal at 8.45pm or for information, please contact Shyan via Mobile: 07814 818008 or Email: shyanbliss@yahoo.com or Suresh Patel, ICCA Chairman via Mobile: 07772 019679 or Email: iccacambridge@msn.com.

ONAM Festival

19/09/09, 12pm – 6pm, Chesterton Community College Hall

The cost per person is £18.00. For more information, please contact Mr Vijay Anand via Tel: 01223 423026, Email: viijaia@gmail.com or visit the Website on: www.camkerala.org.

Background story behind the festival

Onam is a Harvest Festival celebrated by the people of Kerala in Southern India. It is a Hindu festival that honours the mythical King of Kerala, who was called Mahabali and was very popular with the people. The Gods became jealous of Mahabali's popularity and sent Lord Vishnu (the preserver in the Hindu trinity) to send him to the nether world.

Mahabali was very generous and charitable King. Whenever anybody approached him for help or requested for anything he always granted. To test the King, Lord Vishnu disguised himself as a poor Brahmin dwarf called Vamana. He came to the Kingdom of Mahabali, just after Mahabali performed his morning prayers and was preparing to grant boons to Brahmins. Vishnu explained he was a poor Brahmin and asked for a piece of land. The generous King enquired to how much land he wanted. The Brahmin replied that he just wanted as much land as could be covered by his three steps. The King was surprised with the request, but agreed. A learned adviser of the King, Shukracharya, sensed that Vamana was not an ordinary person and warned the King against making the promise. But the generous King replied that it would be a sin for a King to back on his words and asked the Brahmin to take the land. The King could not imagine that the dwarf Brahmin was Lord Vishnu himself.

Just as King Mahabali agreed to grant the land, Vamana began to expand and eventually increased himself to the size of cosmic proportions. With his first step he covered the whole of earth and with the other step he covered the whole of the skies. He then asked King Mahabali where he could keep his third foot. The King realised that he was no ordinary Brahmin. Mahabali with folded hands bowed before Vamana and asked him to place his last step on his head so that he could keep the promise. The Brahmin placed his foot on the head of the King, which pushed him to patala (the nether world). There the King requested the Brahmin to reveal his true identity. Lord Vishnu then appeared before the King in his person. The Lord told the King that he came to test him and that he passed. King Mahabali was pleased to see Lord Vishnu, who granted a boon to the King.

The King was so much attached with his Kingdom and the people, that he requested that he be allowed to visit Kerala once a year. Lord Vishnu was moved by the King's nobility and was pleased to grant the wish. He also blessed the King and said even after losing all his worldly possessions, the King would always be loved by Lord Vishnu and his people.

Traditionally, the people have a vegetarian feast and decorate the front of their houses with flowers in a design on the floor in anticipation of King Mahabali visiting them. The women do a dance and sing songs and people go to the temples. Since the majority of the people in Kerala are Hindus it is their most important festival. But this festival is so popular that all the people of Kerala celebrate it, despite their religions. This year there are three Onam celebrations in Cambridge in September, due to large number of Keral people in Cambridge.

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

New Projects at CECF

Cambridge Refugee and Migrant Support



Helping Asylum Seekers, Refugees & Migrant workers in Cambridge

We provide a first point of contact for asylum seekers, refugees & migrant workers in Cambridge City. Our project offers advice & support with a range of issues including:

Accessing healthcare
Benefits entitlement
Destitution
Employment
Education

Home Office documentation
Housing
Immigration advice
NASS Support
Social Services

In addition we offer free counselling services and English Language tuition.

Drop in for general advice or help
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
10am -1 pm

Service providers

British Red Cross Refugee Service

Asylum seekers & refugees by appointment on a Friday 10am - 4 pm

Immigration Advisory Service

Community Legal Advice & Representation for asylum seekers, refugees & migrant workers by appointment on a Tuesday or Thursday.

For more information or to book an appointment please contact us on 01223 315877.

This is a project run by the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum in partnership with the British Red Cross Refugee Service and MENTER, as well as working with Immigration Advisory Service.

CAMBRIDGE ETHNIC COMMUNITY FORUM

Services provided on CECF site



Cambridge Racial Incident Support Project (CRISP)

Helps individuals who have experienced racial discrimination (e.g. employment) or have been a victim of racial harassment.

Every Wednesday and Thursday (10am - 3pm)

To book an appointment please contact Tony Lindsay on Tel: (01223) 462615 or E-mail: tonylindsay@cecf.co.uk



Italian Benefit Advice

Every 1st Friday of every Month from 10am - 12 (noon)

To book an appointment, please contact Carlo Ciccarello

Tel: (01223) 357889 or Mobile: 07912 034386



Immigration Advisory Service

Community Legal Advice & Representation for Immigration & Asylum Seekers

For more information go to Website: www.iasuk.org

Every Tuesday & Thursday afternoon (appointment only)

To book an appointment, please contact us on: Tel: (01223) 315877



British Red Cross Refugee Services

For Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Every Friday
10am - 4pm

To book an appointment, please contact us on: Tel: (01223) 315877

Drop-ins on CECF site

General Drop-in Times and Free Computer use

Monday to Friday from 10am to 1pm

CECF Staff

Development Officer:	Eddie Stadnik
Project Support Officer:	Mitesh Patel
CRISP Officer:	Tony Lindsay
CECF Receptionist	Asmita Sapra

CECF Management Committee

Chair:	Hazra Awal
Vice Chair:	Mirza Baig
Secretary:	Valerie Berkson
Treasurer:	Joyce Andrade

Members:	Anil Soni
	George Akelinza
	Jason Yow
	Joseph Jabbie
	Maccalli Daniel
	Marta Maj
	Mahendra Soopaul
	Odhavji Bharadwa
	Patricia Crampton
	Rashid Khan
	Redge Carpen
	Rajni Shah

Developing Partnerships with

ABMEC C.I.C.
The Akashi Project
British Red Cross
Cambridge City Council
Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire NHS
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Huntingdonshire Community Association
Immigration Advisory Service
MENTER