

Southall Community Alliance Annual Report 2008/2009

Southall Community Alliance

Annual Report 2008 / 09

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Chair's Introduction

At our annual general meeting last year we concluded that "The challenges as for all organisations large or small subject to the dynamics of public sector funding are equally applicable to SCA particularly in relation to increasing competition for ever-decreasing resources. I am confident that the strategy endorsed by the Board together with SCA's in-house expertise in the pursuit of quality and value for money through flexibility and partnership will be the key to our future success."

In the months following our AGM, the draw on resources became accentuated; the economy went into melt down, reducing funding available for the community and voluntary sector. Paradoxically, this downturn in the economy has increased the demand for services offered by us and our member organisations.

I am pleased to report on behalf of the Board that the team at Southall Community Alliance led by Janpal Basran, Manager of SCA, have again exceeded all targets set by our funding partners and expectations defined by the users.

At the beginning of this year at a joint working group, SCA formulated a strategy for sustainability and growth. In recognition of the stable and experienced team of staff at SCA and the professional support available from members of the board, SCA decided to expand its field of operation. In future SCA, whilst continuing to be a network support organisation for the community and voluntary sector, will also act as a management, training and delivery agency. SCA will step up its engagement in strategic planning, economic development and regeneration. This work will continue to be undertaken independently or in partnership as conditions dictate.

Since our move to our current premises, SCA has provided a valuable facility in the form of a Community Resource Centre. As we go to print we are engaged in discussions, exploring the possibility of a more permanent home for the organisation. The organisation will look to secure high quality premises that are accessible and provide real value for money.

The thematically organised community forums, with specialist guest speakers have once again proved popular with group representatives and residents giving air to issues of interest. The forums have also provided us with the opportunity to strengthen our relationships with other agencies, further increasing our capacity for partnerships.

We are expecting turbulent times for community relations, when all our experience and abilities will be tested. As economic conditions continue to deteriorate the communities in Southall will also face the consequences of unemployment and homelessness. A number of businesses small and large

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employing local people have already disappeared from The Broadway and shopping malls. In response to the global slow down the industries associated with Heathrow Airport are reducing their workforce. This difficult situation is being fully exploited by groups with racist and fascist tendencies which will strain community relations that have been built over a long time.

The Board gratefully recognises the marvellous contribution made by our staff team captained by Janpal Basran at the helm, ably supported and stewarded by Sukhvinder Kaur, Savita Vaid and Lorna Jones in serving the community with distinction and pride. We record our appreciation of all the user groups in providing a service directly to the community. We thank the volunteers for all their effort in adding value and support to our work and the members of the Board for their valuable input and sagacious advice. Finally we say a big thank you to all the fund providers in enabling all of this and more.

Harsev Bains
Chair of SCA

SCA themes and vision for 2010

- Network support organisation for the community and voluntary sector
- Hotdesk provision and support
- Community Forum – a voice of consensus
- Management, training and delivery agency
- Strategic planning, economic development and regeneration
- Focus for social enterprise and youth entrepreneurs

Administrative Officers report

2008/09 has proven to be another busy and rewarding year for me with Southall Community Alliance. In addition to my administrative and reception responsibilities, the past year has seen me become more involved with the various projects SCA has arranged and delivered, which I have particularly enjoyed. This has included producing the publicity for our events and promoting them through our networks, arranging the events and being present to oversee and take notes which then go towards assisting Janpal with the reports for our members and funders, and finally, updating our finances for each project.



Maria Dass of Helplink providing advice to a local resident using a SCA hotdesk

In 2008, SCA received funding from the Equality & Human Rights Commission to deliver a series of Community Cohesion workshops with young people and women. The main theme of these workshops was around 'Stereotypes' and I worked closely with the facilitator to arrange these events and was present to help deliver the project directly to the two key groups. I was pleased that I had the opportunity to be heavily involved in this project as I have always had an interest in working with youth groups and found this provided me with a valuable insight into methods that can be used to engage young people, this overall was a good learning experience in working in this field and has enabled me to think more objectively about my long-term goals.

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Starting in October 2008, SCA has worked in partnership with Hillingdon based organisation REAP to deliver the 'Preparation for Interpreting Programme' in Ealing. The main aims of the project are to identify women from a refugee or asylum seeker background with young children and enrol them onto an accredited ESOL course with REAP.

As it had been identified that a barrier to learning for women is often the responsibility of having to take care of young children within the home, the programme provided onsite crèche facilities, thus overcoming this barrier. The first day of the course was very successful with 25 women attending. I have thoroughly enjoyed working closely with the course participants and getting to know them better to gauge their future goals and aspirations. This, in turn, has enabled me to then signpost them to other services that may prove useful.

As the first point of contact for visitors to the centre, I believe I am constantly developing stronger skills in front line service delivery. Through assisting the general public with their queries and problems, I have had some challenging cases providing me with a hands-on opportunity to educate myself on and learn more about local services. This is probably the area of my work that I find most rewarding as I am able to work directly with our clients and visitors to help them to resolve matters and providing assistance that they may not otherwise be able to access as immediately as is available through SCA. It has also been useful for me to have been responsible for collating information on local services and agencies and compiling various mapping booklets for public use as this provided me with a knowledge of the local area and services I was unfamiliar with.

Last year SCA decided to work towards attaining the PQASSO quality assurance system and I was designated the PQASSO champion for our organisation. Since this decision was made my colleague, Suki Kaur, attended a three day training course with the Charities Evaluation Service and has now become a mentor. We have been making slow and steady progress on the quality standard and now that Suki is a qualified mentor she will be supporting both me and our member groups to obtain the PQASSO quality mark.

During 2008 I attended various training courses that would be both directly related to my duties at SCA and preparing me for prospective future roles. I did a short one day course in Report Writing Skills which is something I am required to do from time to time at SCA and as I am currently due to undertake training with Victim Support to work with domestic violence victims in Southall as a volunteer, the Intermediate Counselling Skills Certificate I obtained in 2008 provided me with skills in interacting with people effectively and empathically. I also gained certificates in both First Aid and Fire Safety which is hugely important for the health and safety of SCA's users.

Towards the end of March 2009, I undertook a PRINCE2 Project Management course. PRINCE2 is a methodology widely used by the UK government, and

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growing in popularity internationally, for project management. During the course, I passed my Foundation exam and am now hoping to sit the Practitioner exam this year. In the long-term I hope to pursue a career in coordinating and managing projects for the voluntary sector and therefore, PRINCE2 interested me immensely. Attending the course meant taking the best part of a week away from the SCA office, and with it being the end of the financial year, was a particularly busy time for us so I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to both Janpal and the SCA Board for continuing to fully support my professional development through the various training courses I have attended over the year.



Eager young participants at the Unity Cup football competition at Featherstone High School in June 2008

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues, Janpal, Suki and Lorna, the SCA management committee and the numerous user groups I work with daily for their constant support and lively company, you truly make working at SCA a wonderful experience and I look forward to another year working with you all.

Savita Vaid
Administrative Officer

Manager's Work Report

The 2008/09 period was a very successful and productive one for the organisation with SCA continuing to provide demand led services and also delivering partnership projects in an innovative way. This report will highlight our key work achievements, identify the funders and partners who made this work possible and gaze into the crystal ball of the future to locate issues that are likely to affect SCA and other community organisations in the year ahead.

SCA Resource Centre

One of the primary ambitions of SCA in 2003 was to develop an office base that could provide help and support to local residents and community groups. This initial vision was realised very successfully and SCA has since acquired a profile as a key hub supporting local community activity in the west of the borough.

The introduction of hot desking, something which is now very popular, was at that time something of an unknown quantity. The successful pilot of the free hot desks by SCA as a means of improving inter-community engagement and supporting the growth of community groups was subsequently adopted by other groups. There has been a widespread appreciation of the benefit that this model of collaborative working and co-location offers to under resourced community organisations.

During 2008/09 we saw another year of high hot desk usage with 27 community groups using the desks. This high figure indicates how important access to desk space is to small voluntary sector groups. These users included a mix of groups, some of whom were well established and others who were relatively new : Punjabi Theatre Academy, Multicultural Arts Association, British Keralites Association, Access for Support & Development Centre, Samafal Community Association, Daryeel Foundation, West London Women's Group, Bahar Centre etc.

Research into the needs of Ealing based organisations regularly identifies access to meeting space as a priority need. The continuing level of usage of the SCA meeting room is consistent with local research findings although the pattern of usage has changed over the years. From 2004 the number of groups requiring use of a room increased annually but in 2007/08 our statistics showed, for the first time, a decrease in the overall number of groups accessing the room.

This simply confirms that in our early years the meeting room was used mainly by small groups for one off or occasional meetings but more recently a slightly reduced number of groups have begun to book the room for longer periods of time. Consequently although the number of user groups may be reduced the amount of time the room is used has actually increased.

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Notwithstanding the block booking of the room the year saw yet another increase in usage with 29 groups using the facility. The range of activities that the room has been used for has varied and included community group meetings, outreach surgeries, community interpreting training, health information workshops, police surgeries, media training, classes for young children etc.

Some of the groups who used the room during 2008/09 included : Community Health Action Trust, Slavic Baltic Community, Refugees in Effective & Active Partnership, Voice of Dalit International, HelpLink etc. Aside from local community groups the room was also used by NHS Stop Smoking, Mind, LBE Trading Standards, Heritage Lottery Fund, Metropolitan Police etc.



Poornima from REAP leading discussion at a meeting of the West London BMER Network at SCA

Staffing

As ever SCA staff were able to deliver on a variety of projects and commitments in a very successful way. We were very pleased that our existing staff complement was enhanced with the arrival of Lorna Jones as a Supplementary Schools Co-ordinator. Lorna had previously worked in Acton delivering a similar project but with a more restricted geographical focus. Clearly with her existing supplementary school contacts, knowledge of the subject matter and co-ordination of the Ealing Supplementary Schools Consortium, Lorna has been

able to raise the profile of supplementary school issues in a positive way. Allied to this has been the additional benefit of facilitating the networking of schools across Ealing and beginning to overcome the isolation that many groups have been experiencing.

Over the past four years the BMER fundraising project has shown itself to be a really important and necessary one in the Ealing context. Suki Kaur, who has been in the post almost continuously since the project began, has continued to provide excellent support and realistic advice to groups hoping to start projects or to expand existing work. Both our user groups and partners continue to comment positively about Suki's work and professionalism.

The BMER fundraising project has provided excellent value for money and if measured simply in terms of the amount of funding that has been attracted to Ealing for the benefit of residents, the successful results would be undeniable. However, as with Lorna's work it is the qualitative impact of the capacity building that has been far reaching and has encouraged greater understanding and co-operation between voluntary sector groups.

Last, but never least, SCA has continued to benefit greatly from the work and commitment of our administrative officer, Savita Vaid. For those who know her the job title does not, in any way, properly describe the variety of roles that Savita has taken on over the past two years. As well as dealing with the administrative affairs of SCA Savita has also taken on responsibility for financial management, monitoring of project delivery, supervising volunteers and work placements etc.

As the first person that most SCA users and visitors encounter Savita's approach to dealing with all requests and queries has done her credit. The post involves contact with people who often have a multitude of urgent problems and the ability to reassure, prioritise and support local residents has made Savita a real asset to SCA.

SCA Funding

Over the years SCA has been very fortunate in being able to attract resources that have enabled us to continue with our core activities and also take on new areas of work and challenges. However, the organisation is not immune to the general economic difficulties facing many people and groups and along with many voluntary sector colleagues we are likely to face a taxing year ahead.

Having said this SCA was able to develop a portfolio of funding in 2008/09 that covered both core and project work referred to above. Our main funders during the year were :

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Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) – this funding, received through Ealing Council, replaced the former Neighbourhood Renewal Fund which had for many years supported SCA. The WNF resources performed a similar role and covered the salaries of three staff as well as contributing towards other core organisational costs.



Manjeet Johal facilitating youth workshop at the Young Adults Centre as part of an EHRC cohesion project

LBE Children’s Fund – provided the support for the Supplementary Schools Co-ordinator and the work to assist local supplementary schools in Ealing. This is a new source of funding for SCA and is a three year project.

Community cohesion commissioning – This is also a three year project that is funded by Ealing Council to deliver activities that increase integration and community cohesion and will be delivered jointly with Acton Community Forum.

London Catalyst – have provided resources to tackle health inequalities through the arrangement of healthy cooking classes, health information sessions etc in partnership with Dormers Wells Community Centre.

Home Office Prevent project – a consortium project in which SCA and other partners arranged events and activities aimed at tackling extremist ideology and on improving civic engagement, training and peer support for the Muslim

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community. The other groups involved were Ealing CVS, Acton Community Forum, Access for Support & Development Centre, Tallo Centre and Somali Youth Union in the UK.

Equality & Human Rights Commission – a year long project that expanded upon an earlier EHRC funded project seeking to improve the levels of positive contact between people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds.

West London Network – provided Change Up funding to SCA and Refugees in Effective and Active Partnership (REAP) to arrange meetings of the West London BMER Network.

HM Revenue & Customs – a one year project to increase the number of advisors who can advise on tax credits and benefits and arrange tax credit advice sessions.

John Lyons Charity – building on the work with supplementary schools this funding will support the work with specific schools and therefore add to the 2007/08 partnership between ContinYou, the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education, Acton Community Forum and various supplementary schools run by BMER community groups.

Partnership working

Although the work of SCA has greatly expanded since 2003 there is a common thread that has run through our work, namely that of partnership working. The organisation makes a concerted and conscious effort to retain the strong involvement of many different community organisations in our work and in 2008/09 SCA continued building on our strong networking contacts.

Joint project delivery

The nature of our delivery commitments in different projects means that a strong element of trust and reliance exists with different voluntary organisations. One of our main partners continues to be Acton Community Forum (ACF) who, much like SCA, are an area based group helping people and groups in the east of the borough. This co-operation was initiated through the hosting of the funding workers in 2004 but it has since grown and we work jointly with ACF on cohesion, youth work, capacity building initiatives etc. Considerable thanks for this sterling support have to go Steve Flynn, Matt Freidson and other staff from ACF.

Ealing Community Network (ECN)

The ECN provides a voice for the voluntary sector in Ealing and SCA has been an active member of both the general network and of the ECN Steering Group.

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Certainly the last year saw ECN have to campaign strongly for community infrastructure support provision. During the year another project of the Ealing CVS, Canbe, also continued to assist with the development of community infrastructure particularly with the emergence of the Greenford, Northolt and Perivale Confederation. As above we must acknowledge the support of Andy Roper and colleagues at Ealing CVS.



SCA and Acton Community Forum hosting a meeting with colleagues from Ireland visiting Southall

Youth work

Although SCA assists many groups that help young people, working with this audience ourselves is still a growing area of work for the organisation. Many of our community cohesion events involved young people eg workshops, art project, cultural events, media training, visit to the Emirates Stadium etc. In addition to this SCA developed links with national organisations such as VCS Engage, Children England and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Service (NCVYS). As a result of these contacts we were able to arrange a 'Love your tender' workshop on commissioning in March 2009. There are already plans to expand our work with young people in 2009/10 and we expect that this will evolve into a significant part of our annual work programme.

West London BMER Network

Quarterly meetings of this network have been arranged jointly with REAP from Hillingdon at various west London locations. The network is funded by resources provided through the West London Network and both our organisations have used the network very effectively to explore many issues affecting the BMER voluntary sector. Network meetings discussed many matters of real relevance to the sector including single issue funding, preventing violent extremism initiatives, involvement in cohesion work and the funding difficulties encountered by BMER groups. There is a very significant contribution in this work from REAP so we are especially grateful to Sarah Crowther and her staff.

Health

SCA remained involved in the PCT Equalities Steering Group and our positive relationship with the Primary Care Trust was reinforced when Robert Creighton, PCT Chief Executive, was again our annual general meeting guest speaker in October 2008. The year also saw SCA deliver other health related events such as a stroke awareness workshop, healthy cooking classes, health information workshops, hosting stop smoking surgeries etc

Community safety

The past two years have seen SCA becoming increasingly more involved in preventing violent extremism (PVE) projects. These form part of a national Prevent strategy that has a dual focus of challenging extremist ideology and working to improve the civic engagement of disaffected members of the Muslim community. As well as being linked to LBE funded projects SCA was also involved in a larger partnership Home Office funded project that sought to deliver work with women and young members of the Muslim community.

Another example of SCA's collaboration with local groups was provided through our support for a community engagement project sponsored by the Metropolitan Police and the University of Central Lancashire. This engagement programme was aimed at improving police understanding of specific communities across various London Boroughs. In Ealing the target audience was the Somali community and the local project and research was carried out by the Somali Youth Union in the UK. The project produced a wealth of useful data and qualitative information and SCA was asked to host meetings of the steering group overseeing the project, which culminated in the publication of a booklet entitled, 'Narrowing the Gap – Solutions' that covered areas such as gang crime, trust in policing, Islamophobia and hate crime etc.

SCA continued to have involvement in a hate crime reporting group and the Independent Advisory Group working with the police. It was particularly satisfying when our last Community Forum of the year was able to attract the Borough

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Commander, Chief Superintendent Sultan Taylor, who discussed many issues with an eager audience.

London Borough of Ealing (LBE)

Ealing Council has been a major stakeholder in the work of SCA since 2003. Obviously there has been a strong financial input provided the LBE into our work but this has been a mutually beneficial relationship with SCA establishing a positive rapport with council officers. As with the previous year SCA was involved in the Ealing Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum and the Stronger Communities Board, both bodies which closely dealt with sustainability issues for the voluntary sector and clarified links with the local authority. As in previous years this is a time to recognise the valuable help provided by colleagues from the Partnerships and Policy Team at LBE.



Suki Kaur from SCA leading the discussion at a meeting of the Southall Connect Network

SCA members

One of the key features of SCA's work is to support and stimulate local voluntary sector growth and development. Over the past few years one noticeable characteristic of our annual reflections has been the consistent growth of the SCA membership. In 2008/09 a total of 9 new groups joined the SCA network including :

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West London Womens Group, SSG World, Creative Comedia C.I.C, Sadaghah Welfare Development, BUCMAS, Asylum and Refugee Care, Youth Focus Initiative, Mind All Support Group and Somali Centre for Political & International Studies.

Community Cohesion

SCA has been heavily involved in community cohesion work since the establishment of the resource centre in 2003. The provision of a visible symbol of different communities working and sharing resources at one location has been a key part of our work. In the intervening years SCA has received specific resources that have enabled us to build on our original vision and produce cohesion related work in Ealing.



Smiley faces all round! Eugene and Irene Culas are joined by Joseph Masindet providing cultural information stalls

During 2008/09 SCA again received funding from the Equality & Human Rights Commission and London Borough of Ealing to deliver work aimed at bringing the communities of the borough together and dealing with the barriers that sometimes hinder cross cultural understanding. One of the key themes under both projects was the need to create opportunities for people to meet and share a common platform.

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The types of activities arranged during the year included :

- 3 'Talk Back' youth workshops in Southall and Acton
- 'Speak Up' womens workshops
- Positive Images conference
- Diversity arts project at Southall College
- Arts and cultural work and shows in Ealing
- Accredited youth media training for young people
- Involvement of young people from across Ealing in Unity Cup football competition
- 'World Foods' events at Dormers Wells Community Centre



Carl Gabriel (artist) and Maggy Aylott, head of Dormers Wells High School, at an arts exhibition at the Dominion Centre in Southall

The delivery of our project work has been consistent with SCA's approach over the years of working in partnership with our voluntary sector colleagues to extend the reach of activities to the widest possible audience. Our main partner during the year was Acton Community Forum but we also had excellent support from ASDC, Tallo Centre, Bahar Centre, Education & Social Group, VODI, West London Women's Group, The Russian Circle etc. SCA also needs to extend special thanks to Manjeet Johal for her expert facilitation of the various workshops with women and young people.

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On a personal note the recognition of our cohesion work has now reached an international audience. Early in 2008 SCA was visited by a group of councillors and officers from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The group, sponsored by LBE, were visiting Ealing to see how the authority was dealing with the integration issues relating to increases in the migrant worker population. The group found the visit to SCA so fascinating that both SCA and Acton Community Forum were invited to the international 'Challenge for Change' conference in Dundalk. Both organisations were able to talk specifically about how Ealing was maintaining good relations between the different communities in the area.

Community cohesion work will remain an essential part of the SCA agenda regardless of the availability of project funding. The growing diversity of local communities combined with the increased pressure upon local infrastructure means that area based organisations, like SCA, will continue to have an important role to play in enhancing positive relationships between people from diverse backgrounds.

SCA Board

One of the most stable and reassuring features of SCA's development has been the dedication and involvement of our Board of Trustees. The Board can consist of up to 15 trustees who are elected for a three year term and who make an invaluable contribution to the scrutiny and monitoring of the work of the organisation.

Following the 2008 AGM there were 2 vacancies on the Board and members considered co-option as a way of filling these vacancies whilst also striving to ensure that the Board composition was relevant to the local area. During the year the two main issues occupying the trustees remained the on-going need to secure core funding and the urgent need to resolve the future accommodation needs of SCA.

Although the Board is a partnership of equals the SCA office is always particularly grateful to the honorary members with whom we have most frequent contact : Harsev Bains (Chair), Balvinder Chahal (Vice-Chair), Amir Fouladvand (Secretary) and Dilbagh Chana (Treasurer).

The Future

SCA's work during 2008/09 shows the value of an area based organisation that can assist both community sector groups but also local residents. There is no doubt that we have been able to build on our links with groups and capacity building expertise over the past five years to mould the organisation into our current position.

As with previous years the perennial challenges that face SCA are related to future resourcing and accommodation and these continue to loom large on our horizon. In last years report the 'funding crunch' was mentioned and in the 2008/09 the first signs of the impending economic difficulties facing the sector began to show themselves in Ealing. One of the key considerations for local groups will be about survival and for developing practical plans for sustaining themselves through this difficult period.



Kalwant Sahota expertly delivering a healthy cooking demonstration at the Dormers Wells Community Centre

Even more so than in previous years it will be imperative that groups seriously look to build a portfolio of funding. Whilst this is easier said than done it can only realistically be achieved through partnership or consortia bids that build on the social capital that groups like SCA have developed over time.

One of the key local impacts of this economic uncertainty will be the difficulties that many groups face in accessing funding. This is not an issue to be considered in the abstract because less funds for groups may mean less advice to elderly residents, less activities for young people, less training to help the unemployed etc. There is a real and negative effect upon local people that accrues when voluntary sector resources are in short supply.

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In the coming year SCA will certainly build on the existing partnership arrangements that we have developed with local groups and establish new projects that build on previous successes. These applications will involve an element of resources for core funding allied with project specific funding. It is clear that the priorities for many funders have shifted in the past few years away from capacity building work to goals that more directly assist people who are affected by disadvantage and deprivation. SCA needs to retain a degree of flexibility to respond to this change and be open minded about shifting the focus of our work away from working with groups, to also taking on a service delivery role.

The other significant challenge for SCA continues to be in relation to accommodation. In 2007 the ownership of the SCA premises changed hands and passed from LBE to a private landlord. The situation the organisation is now faced with consists of responding to one of two options. The first involves considering the negotiation of a new lease for our current premises and the second involves the identification of a new base from which to operate. The pragmatic approach of the SCA trustees has been to keep both options open and we hope to secure a resolution to this issue as soon as is practicable.

Aside from finances and premises the other significant issue facing SCA is one of direction. For many years the organisation has benefited greatly by having a building which sometimes determined the parameters of our work. In terms of capacity building this was a huge bonus but with the changes referred to above the organisation will also need to consider future areas of work. Following discussions at a Board away day it seems likely that SCA will be more heavily involved in work with young people, employment/training, community safety and on cohesion projects. This is in no way at odds with the core work of the organisation and this focus should assist SCA in diversifying our funding base whilst continuing to produce quality work that is urgently required locally.

Supplementary Schools Co-ordinator Report

Southall Community Alliance has been working as part of an Ealing Children Fund programme to support supplementary schools across the borough to improve educational attainment in the African, Caribbean, Somali and mixed-heritage communities. The support focused on providing individual support, advice and guidance to supplementary schools as well as offering training and capacity building services. We worked to develop quality within supplementary school provisioning. The programme also worked to improve links with mainstream schools through Extended Schools and Ealing Education Department.



Cllr Ian Gibb presenting awards at launch of Ealing Supplementary Schools directory in June 2009

Supplementary schools formed a borough wide consortium of supplementary schools and agreed a work plan for the year going forward. The schools shared best practice, and exchanged ideas to improve their overall performance with the children and families they support. The consortium is currently expanding its membership base as new supplementary schools understand the benefits and join the group.

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Groups capacity needs were identified and a series of training sessions specifically designed for supplementary school leaders were held. Supplementary education providers from across the borough of Ealing participated in these workshops and all participants were provided with policies and suggestions to improve their provision. The training also afforded opportunities for networking across the groups. Certificates of attendance were awarded to all participants. A number of mutually-beneficial benefits have already accrued as coordinators and teachers have learnt from each other and cross-pollination is taking place.

A supplementary support class ("The Bright Footballers" programme) was started that specifically works with footballers which has been well-received by all participating boys who are making good progress.

Guidance was provided to supplementary schools across the borough as well as new groups currently work in and out of the borough but who are looking to provide supplementary educational services in Ealing. Discussions were held with a large number of supplementary schools, 10 of which are currently working towards achieving the Quality Framework for Supplementary Schools by the National Resource Centre / ContinYou.

Work is ongoing with School Improvement Partners to develop and improve relationships with mainstream schools. Presentations were made to mainstream school heads, the primary to secondary transition professionals, and an Ealing Education team meeting aiming to improve the knowledge and image of supplementary education within mainstream schools and the Ealing Education Department. As a result of ongoing relationships with mainstream schools, one high school has offered to provide educational support to supplementary schools. Another provided training for and offered the use of the school's virtual learning environment to supplementary school leaders. Other schools have contacted us to refer pupils whom they believe would benefit from supplementary school support.

The Scrutiny Board visited two supplementary schools in the borough and gained a good understanding of the operation of supplementary schools. The group were pleasantly impressed with the supplementary schools and provided positive feedback as a result of their visit and offered suggestions to support the work of the groups. Work is ongoing to encourage mainstream school professionals to visit supplementary schools to gain first-hand understanding of how they benefit their pupils.

Additionally, we compiled and published a comprehensive listing of supplementary education in the Ealing Supplementary Schools Directory. The directory was launched at a public meeting in April attended by Councillor Ian Gibb, supplementary leaders, representatives from mainstream schools, funders, and other voluntary sector organisations. Councillor Gibb presented awards to

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the only supplementary school leaders in Ealing to have received the Quality Framework awards at Silver and Gold level. He also presented awards to leaders who had attended all sections of the training for supplementary schools based on the Quality Framework. The occasion allowed the various groups to meet, network, exchange ideas and develop relationships.

Lorna Jones
Supplementary Schools Co-ordinator



Keen young Iranian and Afghani children at an activity session arranged by the Bahar Centre at SCA

BMER Fundraising Officers Report

It gives me great pleasure to report on the work of the BMER Fundraising Officer Project 2008/09. The year has been a busy one with a large number of grant applications drafted, and groups supported. Over the last year 41 groups from in and around Southall have been supported with development and fundraising issues. The project has once again exceeded targets as agreed with our funders and has had some very positive outcomes for groups in Southall, in a time of economic hardships for individuals, businesses and the third sector.

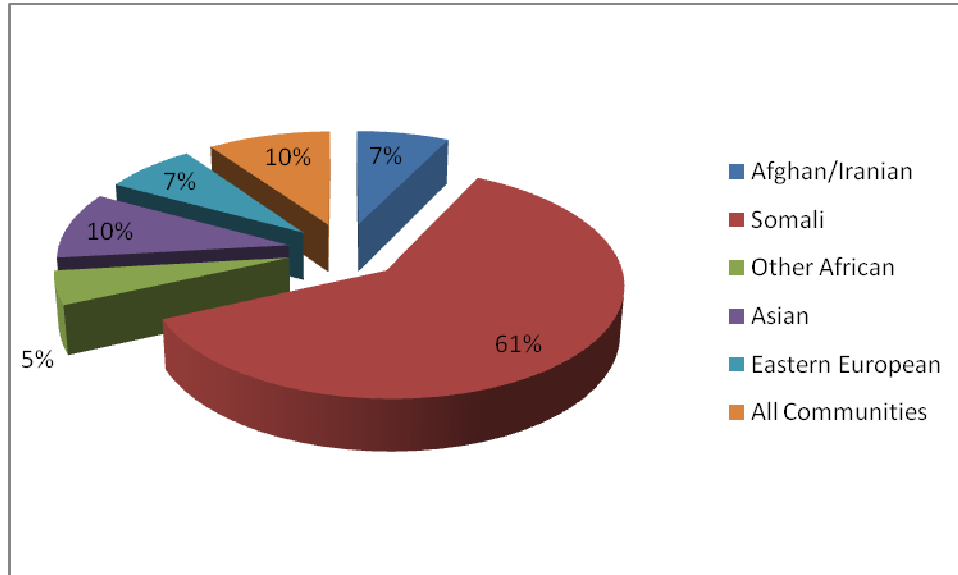
The project aims to provide fundraising and developmental support to BMER lead voluntary and community groups in Southall and surrounding areas through one to one meetings and some group support. Advice and practical help has been offered in:

- Starting an organisation
- Developing policies and procedures compliant with current legislation
- Drafting funding applications
- Budgeting
- Book keeping
- Charity Registration

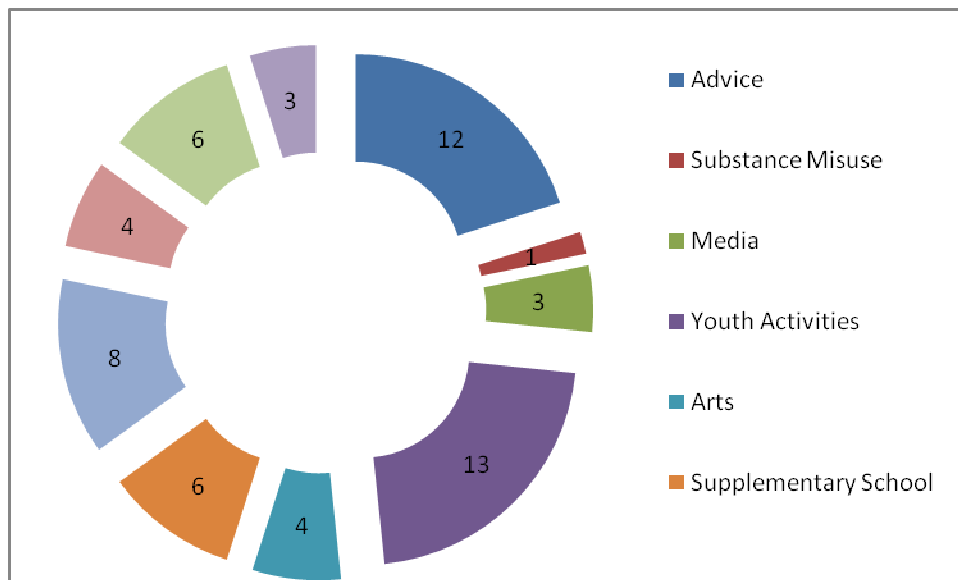
Achievements

- Over 41 groups have been supported with development and fundraising issues
- Over 70 applications for the value of £401,100 have been drafted and submitted
- £90,400 of grants have been secured
- £210,000 of applications are outstanding (5 Cash 4 Youth, 1 City Bridge & 1 Home Office Community Fund)

COMMUNITIES SERVED BY VCO GROUPS SUPPORTED



SERVICES PROVIDED BY VCO GROUPS



SCA Connect

In 2008 I also took on the task of setting up, facilitating and administrating a new Southall based network aimed at creating a voice and platform for local voluntary and community groups which would also encourage dialogue between groups. Meetings are held quarterly and to date 4 meetings of SCA Connect have been held and have been attended by a range of organisations. The meetings are currently chaired by Mr Abdullahi Osman of Access to Support and Development

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Centre, who was elected by those attending the first meeting, and will remain chair for the duration of 12months. Agendas for past meetings have included:

- Discussion about single issue funding
- Expanding the work of Acton Arts Forum
- Discussion about a women's network in Ealing
- Heritage Lottery Development support in Ealing

Meetings have generated interesting discussions as well as raising much needed awareness of local services provided by voluntary and community groups and changes in local and national policies as well as funding structures which impact their work.

Funding

Heritage Lottery Fund

In a time when obtaining funding is ever more competitive the voluntary sector in Ealing has been in a privileged position of receiving targeted developmental support from a Development Officer from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Ealing is being targeted for this support as it has traditionally received less Heritage Lottery Fund money than other boroughs in London. Support has been provided in a number of ways:

- Workshops
- One to one application development support
- Training for development workers in Ealing.

This dedicated support from Nighat Taimuri (Development Officer HLF) has meant that groups have a clearer understanding of the aims of the Heritage Lottery Fund, what 'Heritage' actually means and how they can better their chances of being funded by developing tight heritage focussed applications. This work has generated a number of interesting applications from across the Borough and I am currently working with 4 Southall groups that will be submitting applications under the 'Your Heritage' theme this year. It is clear that applications under the 'Young Roots' theme are still under represented and this may be an area to explore with groups in the forthcoming year.

Grassroots Grants

Another great development for the Voluntary and Community Sector has been the arrival of Grassroots Grants. Managed locally by Ealing & Brentford Consolidated Charity, Grassroots is part of £130 million national drive by the Government to support VCO's working to improve the life of local people and communities. VCO's with an annual turnover of £30,000 and with a management committee are eligible to apply for grants for a maximum of £5,000.

To date:

- 24 Grassroots grant applications have been submitted
- 20 have been successful

Grassroots money will be available for the next three years and is already proving to be a welcome lifeline for many small VCO's in Southall. The application form and the process in general is very simple, with panel meetings monthly so any groups who meet the eligibility criteria wishing to submit an application form can contact SCA for assistance.

Project Development

PQASSO

Whilst writing last years report I was in the process of applying to become a PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance for Small Organisations) Mentor. I am pleased to inform you that I have now achieved my mentor license and have to date supported 3 organisations embark on working towards PQASSO accreditation. I have also started supporting our very own Quality Champion, Savita Vaid, to manoeuvre SCA through this process. Achieving a quality standard is an ongoing process and there are many quality assurance systems to choose from, PQASSO now offers accreditation and is becoming more and more recognised by funders and investors.

TIDE –Training the Trainer

During the last year I have also embarked upon and completed the 'Preparing to Teach in The Life Long Sector (PTLLS) Qualification run by TIDE. Although this meant returning to the world of study for six months, the experience was definitely worth it. I currently deliver a small amount of training to groups each year but with this new qualification I will be able to volunteer some time with TIDE as well as look more closely at the training needs of VCO groups in Southall.

Future Challenges

Once again the BMER Fundraising Project has delivered over and above what it set out to achieve both in the number of groups supported and in the number of applications drafted, it should however be noted that in terms of successful applications numbers, as a proportion of what has been submitted, have been lower than previous years (roughly 25%). The reason for this is that once again the project has supported a number of new groups who only have a capacity to apply for and manage small scale funding. Furthermore the larger applications that have been submitted were done at the end of the financial year meaning their decisions are pending.

The formation of more and small BMER lead groups is becoming a problem, both in terms of the capacity of this project as well as the sustainability of their activity.

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The words partnership and consortia are words we will hear more and more in this sector and are pivotal to the survival of organisations and services. In the midst of a recession, funding has decreased as funders are cutting back and reprioritising spending, yet the pressure upon VCO's is compounded, especially those providing advice on welfare rights and benefits as well as training and employment services. One of the ways the sector can respond to this challenge is to share expertise and resources through partnership working, this would also reduce the competition between groups to secure funding. I do however appreciate that partnership working poses its own challenges and much work needs to be undertaken to build trust and rapport between groups so this will be an area of focus for the project over the next year.

It is worth noting that the funding for this project is also not secure beyond next year so SCA will be working hard to sustain and build on the projects successes by obtaining alternative funding beyond 2010.



SCA arranges trip to the Emirates Stadium for Southall children, with assistance of Havelock Family Centre and the Russian Circle

On a final note I would like to say a huge thank you to all the groups I have worked with over the last year and I look forward to working with you all in the year to come. I would like to extend this thanks to Janpal Basran and Savita Vaid who, as always, have been very supportive and created a great atmosphere at SCA for the BMER Fundraising Project to flourish.

Views from partners

HelpLink

Accessible, genuine, friendly, hospitable, helpful and supportive are just some of the words that come to mind when I think of SCA. It has been both a pleasant and useful experience to have been associated with SCA for a number of years now. SCA continue to be both a very relevant and innovative support centre, or rather, a system enabling local community groups to forge an alliance and support one another.

Though we are not an established charity, SCA, under the leadership of Mr Janpal, have given us the opportunity to utilise the space and other facilities to serve the community with our unique services and help desk. Our concept, ideas and innovative initiative in the form of HelpLink has been fully encouraged and supported by SCA.

It has been a very useful and encouraging experience for us working with SCA. The support and guidance provided by the staff has been of great help to us, giving us confidence and inspiration to continue our initiative. We wish SCA more success in their future endeavours for the benefit of the local community and community groups.

Mr L. M. Doss
Convener
HelpLink & International Campaign for Dalit Christian Rights

Ealing Mencap

I have worked closely with SCA and I clearly support the work they undertake. I have lived and worked in Southall for over 30 years and the good work, reliability and commitment from all the staff, Janpal, Savita and Suki, is the best ever. All three of them are extremely supportive at all times.

The office provides easy access. Our carers are happy and they can come and go when I am there. We are proud to be associated with SCA and hopfully continue to work with them in partnership for many years to come.

I would like, on behalf of Julian Hilman, Director of Ealing Mencap, to thank the committee and the staff of SCA for supporting our project. We are very grateful.

Fatima Akhtar
Advocacy and Support Project
Ealing Mencap

Southall 0-12 SAFE

The 0-12 SAFE team located in Southall is a partnership between Ealing Council, the West London Mental Health Trust and Ealing Primary Care Trust. The SAFE team is made up of social care, education, health and mental health practitioners, working together to meet the needs of the local community.

We work with children and families with additional needs and would benefit from some extra help. By intervening earlier, we work in a preventative way, empowering families and improving outcomes for children.

We work with other professionals from a range of statutory and voluntary backgrounds to ensure children and families receive appropriate services in their local community. 0-12 SAFE has furthered its links with SCA since 2008 by running successful monthly Community Surgeries at the SCA offices to help engage a wider audience and advice the general public around a range of issues such as, childcare options, employment and volunteering opportunities, financial support, budgeting and debts, parenting, domestic violence, contact disputes, substance misuse, child development & education, general queries and signposting to other services

In addition, having a presence, hotdesking, attending and taking part in SCA connect meetings, conferences and events at the SCA office has allowed 0-12 SAFE to develop a positive working relationship with other voluntary sector groups and establish effective referral pathways.

Suad Jama
Southall SAFE 0-19

Southall Community Alliance

Board Members

Harsev Bains	(Chair)
Balvinder Chahal	(Vice Chair)
Dilbagh Chana	(Treasurer)
Amir Fouladvand	(Company Secretary)
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George Twyman	
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Ravi Jain	
Carl Johnson	
Promila Bhatia	

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SCA Staff

Janpal Basran

Manager

Savita Vaid

Administrative Officer

Sukhvinder Kaur

BMER Fundraising Officer

Lorna Jones

Supplementary Schools Coordinator

Partnerships in which SCA has been involved 2008 / 2009

1. Stronger Communities Board
2. Ealing Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum
3. Ealing Community Network
4. Southall Connect
5. PCT Equalities Steering Group
6. West London BMER Network
7. Planning and Community Working Group
8. Council, Business and Community Partnerships Standing Scrutiny Panel
9. Development Workers Group
10. Refugees in Effective & Active Partnership
11. Change Up Working Group
12. Independent Advisory Group
13. Ealing Race Hate Crime Group