

# RedbridgeCVS

Annual Report 07-08



# Mission

To promote a strong, effective and independent voluntary and community sector in Redbridge.

# Aims

1. Redbridge voluntary & community sector to be strong partners when working with local statutory bodies.
2. Redbridge voluntary & community sector to maintain its independence and flexibility.
3. RedbridgeCVS to be a credible and authoritative representative of the voluntary and community sector.
4. RedbridgeCVS to be able to respond to the voluntary & community sector support needs; enabling Redbridge voluntary and community sector to grow to meet local needs.
5. RedbridgeCVS to continue to encourage, support and facilitate the development of sustainable services to children.
6. RedbridgeCVS to provide sound financial planning in order to continue the furtherance of our work with the voluntary and community sector within Redbridge and across the East London Network.



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# Chair's Report

## Brian Spinks

2007/8 was another year of great activity at RedbridgeCVS and in the voluntary sector across Redbridge as a whole. We continued to support over 500 groups with regular information as well as working closely with several groups to help them realise their ambitions and objectives, and were able to help a number of local groups to achieve recognised Quality Marks and secure grants to develop their work. The core work of RedbridgeCVS continued through the year – as reflected in the rest of this report. This was supplemented during the year by our production of a directory giving details of 500 local voluntary and community organisations, as well as our continuing involvement in the world of fitness and exercise and the further development of the Redbridge Volunteer Centre.

The end of 07/08 also saw the end of the work of the Redbridge Children's Fund which we have been delivering since 2003. This was a hugely successful programme that invested over £2 ½ million for local projects supporting local children – and provided an example of commissioning at its best. See page 12 for more on this.

Our hosting of the Children's Network and management of the Children's Participation Panel continued to demonstrate our commitment to supporting the voices of children and the voluntary groups that work for them.

This major theme of supporting voices to be raised and heard was further reflected during the year. We continued to represent the

sector at the Redbridge Strategic Partnership and several of its supporting "cluster groups", as well as hosting the Local Authority / Voluntary Sector Partnership meetings and running monthly "Network" meetings for local groups to share views and inform local representatives of their opinions and ideas.

We also started to run the new "Community Voice" programme which aims to support a new cohort of people to become voluntary and community sector representatives – as well as working with those currently carrying out this important role to become better informed about the policy contexts in which they operate, and to understand how best to research and reflect the needs of the communities they seek to represent.

In addition to this, we were also very pleased to complete work on the revised Compact and its associated Codes of Conduct. This document (which is available from RedbridgeCVS as a CD and as a download from our website) outlines a joint agreement between the local voluntary/community sector and the Redbridge Council, PCT, Police and Fire Service. It aims to build trust and improve working relationships between the sectors and recognises the vital role played by us all in the life of the borough.

We were approached during the year by Redbridge Council and the Metropolitan Police Authority to help establish a new forum for local community representatives to engage with the local Police and the Council teams with responsibility for community

safety. We were very pleased to be able to help local communities to find a voice in this way, and believe that this new forum can play an important role in ensuring that the guardians of our peace and security are working closely with the people they exist to serve.

The voluntary and community sector in Redbridge represents a huge diversity of people and views – including many people that are often unheard in the local planning and delivery of services. We hope that these mechanisms can help local people to increase

the influence they can have on local decision making and we remain committed to ensuring that the voice of the voluntary and community sector can be given authority to ensure that the needs and aspirations of local voluntary organisations and their members are heard at the highest levels.

My thanks to my fellow Trustees for their strong support throughout the year, and to our Local Authority, Redbridge PCT, all our stakeholders and community groups, enabling us to complete challenging and very worthwhile projects during the year.

We are fortunate in having a very accomplished staff team, very well led by our joint Chief Officers - Marcia and Ross - and great credit is due to them all for our successes.

We look forward to working with you all – and hearing your voices - the in the year ahead.

# Achievements for 2007-2008

RedbridgeCVS  
successfully met  
all the targets set  
by our funders and  
our board



The key achievements of the charity during the year were:

- 1 Management of the Redbridge Children's Fund and its Partnership Group - including commissioning projects spending £447,858 locally in 2007-2008
- 2 Established a Volunteer Centre which began placing volunteers and registering Third Sector host organisations.
- 3 Delivery of development work and capacity building support to small and medium sized voluntary and community groups
- 4 Hosting monthly Redbridge Voluntary Sector Network and Children's Network meetings
- 5 Production of a monthly newsletter, "Community", distributed to over 400 local groups
- 6 Production of a quarterly Children's Network newsletter distributed to over 370 groups
- 7 Production of 68 email bulletins, sent to 900 local voluntary and community groups and agencies
- 8 Helping a range of groups with successful funding applications
- 9 Delivering accredited training to local voluntary and community groups

- 10 Delivering the LSC/ESF funded Redbridge LEAD project, to capacity build voluntary and community groups wishing to deliver training or education services
- 11 Managing the local ChangeUp consortium, ensuring it was 'fit for purpose' and delivering support to local Third Sector organisations as well as linking and liaising with the sub-regional and regional ChangeUp consortia
- 12 Positively liaising with key statutory partners on behalf of the local voluntary and community sector, including through membership of the Redbridge Strategic Partnership and Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership, and the providing formal support to elected Third Sector representatives at the Local Authority/ Voluntary Sector Partnership
- 13 Supporting children's participation in a range of local developments, including within the Children's Trust and the Children's Fund
- 14 Researching, producing and distributing a Directory of local voluntary, community and faith based organisations
- 15 Playing an active part in the East London CVS Network
- 16 Providing information services including a library, internet access and individual support to voluntary and community organisations in Redbridge
- 17 Providing and maintaining a database of all known voluntary and community groups in Redbridge
- 18 Providing a multi-purpose website, including an online directory of local voluntary and community groups
- 19 Playing an active membership role within the ACE (community accountancy scheme) Steering Group
- 20 Completing and launching a revised Compact on relations between a wide range of local statutory bodies and the voluntary/community sector in Redbridge
- 21 Delivering training for potential new community representatives through the "Community Voice" programme
- 22 Delivering an innovative exercise project, which brought trainers into community organisations to encourage people at risk of suffering health inequalities to take part in healthy exercise activities
- 23 Hosting the new Mental Health (BME) Community Development Worker, in partnership with the Redbridge PCT and North East London Mental Health Trust
- 24 Establishing and supporting the new Redbridge Police Community Engagement Group, in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Authority.

# Chief Officers' Report

## Ross Diamond and Marcia Samuels

**A**nother year seems to have flown by, with barely time for us to draw breath. By the time that this Annual Report is printed, no doubt, there will have been yet more developments.

Once upon a time, the voluntary and community sector was a relatively stable environment, but since 2002, when the Treasury produced its "Cross-Cutting Review" we have been fated to live in 'interesting times.' All the major political parties now seem to agree that the voluntary, community, faith and not-for profit sector – or "Third Sector" as we are now encouraged to call ourselves – have major roles to play in public life. This has meant increasing scrutiny from politicians and government agencies, as well as changes in the legal structures of many charities and a need to constantly review our aims and objectives.

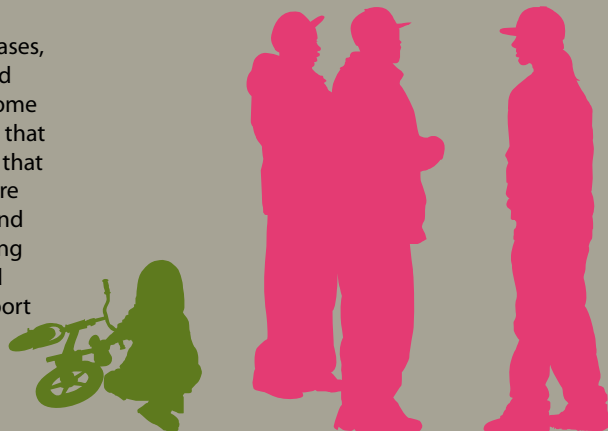
RedbridgeCVS has to deal with all of this change for ourselves, as well as trying to help other Third Sector groups to navigate these choppy and changeable waters.

As well as the change of name of our sector itself, there are also many other changes affecting us, including, in some cases, grant funding giving way to commissioned contracts. The decision of whether to become an agency delivering mainstream services that were once the preserve of the state is one that many of the groups with which we work are having to consider. Compacts, contracts and Community Interest Companies are keeping us all busy, and RedbridgeCVS has worked very hard to change the way that we support

local Third Sector groups so that we can respond in ways that are most useful to the groups themselves, to help them develop to become exactly the organisations that they want to be.

Local groups are rising to the challenges of becoming service delivery bodies, as well as advocates and champions for local people needing support or wishing to help Redbridge have the communities and environment it deserves. As part of this, RedbridgeCVS established a new Volunteer Centre during the year, which we hope will settle into being a long standing service enabling local Third Sector groups to find help, and for local people to find appropriate and rewarding volunteering opportunities.

The Third Sector in Redbridge is dynamic, challenging and exciting, and the staff, volunteers and Trustees of RedbridgeCVS are pleased and proud to play our part in supporting all its efforts.





# Finances

## Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st March 2008

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Income	1,230,986	1,159,995
Expenditure	(1,141,828)	(1,102,375)
Income less expenditure	89,158	57,620
Brought forward - beginning of year	334,903	277,283
Carried forward - end of year	424,061	334,903

## Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2008

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	3,756	6,704
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	85,401	58,764
Cash at bank and in hand	546,813	431,620
	632,214	490,384
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(211,909)	(162,185)
Net current assets	420,305	328,199
	424,061	334,903
<b>Reserves</b>		
Restricted funds	288,471	61,742
Unrestricted funds	135,590	273,161
	424,061	334,903

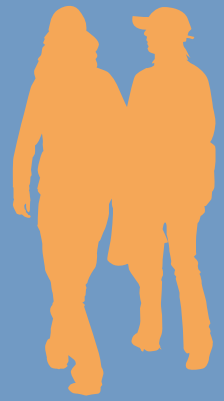
**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st March 2008**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total 2008</b>	<b>Total 2007</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
Incoming Resources from generated funds				
Generated Income	7,718	-	7,718	8,138
Investment Income	17,012	-	17,012	7,502
Incoming Resources from charitable activities				
Grants	64,845	1,141,411	1,206,256	1,144,355
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>89,575</b>	<b>1,141,411</b>	<b>1,230,986</b>	<b>1,159,995</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Cost of generating funds				
Charitable activities:				
Costs in furtherance of charities objects	118,162	565,419	683,581	622,381
Grants payable	-	447,858	447,858	473,891
Governance costs	9,801	588	10,389	6,103
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>127,963</b>	<b>1,013,865</b>	<b>1,141,828</b>	<b>1,102,375</b>
Net incoming resources for the year	(38,388)	127,546	89,158	57,620
Transfers	(99,183)	99,183	-	-
Brought forward - beginning of year	273,161	61,742	334,903	277,283
<b>Carried forward - end of year</b>	<b>135,590</b>	<b>288,471</b>	<b>424,061</b>	<b>334,903</b>

The information presented here is extracted from the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st March 2008.

The full report with detailed financial information and the auditor's report is available from [www.redbridgecvcs.net](http://www.redbridgecvcs.net) or call 020 8553 1004 to have a copy posted to you.

# Development Work



**R**edbridgeCVS' core activities include supporting Third Sector groups in the borough to grow and realise their full potential. It does this by providing support in various areas such as planning, fundraising, writing policies and accessing training.

In 2007/8 the Development Team was built around our two Small Groups Workers, who were involved in the following areas in assisting and supporting local groups:

## **Training / Workshops**

These were provided in response to groups telling us their needs. They included:

- Fundraising
- Roles and Responsibilities of Management Committees
- Health & Safety
- Project Management
- Minute taking
- Events management
- Report writing
- Employment Law

The feedback from participants was very positive and in many cases, groups were given follow up support afterwards.

## **Network meetings**

The team organised RedbridgeCVS' monthly Network meetings. These provide a forum for voluntary and community groups in Redbridge to come together to share useful information and discuss relevant issues affecting their communities. Some of the speakers (chosen by attendees) included

- The London Borough of Redbridge (electoral services, recycling team, grants review programme, etc.)
- Redbridge PCT
- The Big Lottery Fund
- City Parochial Fund
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- and a variety of both well established and new and emerging voluntary and community groups

## **Advice and Support**

The project regularly gave telephone, email and one-to-one advice and information to organisations around areas such as setting up, fundraising, planning, registering as a charity, staff recruitment, project management, developing policies and office/project space.

Support and assistance was provided both at the RedbridgeCVS main office and also through outreach visits to groups' own premises to 32 organisations. The project also carried out a number of health checks and development action plans as well as assisting groups to write business plans. A number of groups were assisted in starting to work towards quality assurance systems and quality marks that will help organisations to demonstrably improve their performance and efficiency. Groups were also signposted to other relevant agencies when appropriate such as ACE (Accounting for Community Enterprises) and others.

# Children's Fund

This was the last year of the successful Children's Fund in Redbridge. Since its inception in 2002, as a Government initiative to help vulnerable and disadvantaged children aged 5-13, the work in Redbridge has been led by Roger Backhouse, RedbridgeCVS' Children's Fund Programme Manager. During that time the Fund has invested over £2 ½ million pounds in projects supporting local children.

The Children's Fund in Redbridge was one of only four in London that were led by CVS' and not by Local Authorities and we aimed to provide an example of effective multi-agency partnership working.

The work began with the development of a Children's Fund Plan, which followed extensive consultation with all sectors, and most importantly, with children themselves. This led to "Quality Play and Leisure" being adopted as the overarching theme, with four sub-themes:-

- Support for families
- Preventing youth crime and reducing the fear of crime
- Promoting good nutrition and health
- Helping Children achieve educationally

A multi-agency commissioning process was developed, and under the Chairmanship of Dr. Keith White, succeeded in commissioning a wide range of vital services for local children. Originally due to end in 2004, the Children's Fund ran until March 2008, with some projects continuing to receive funding well into 2008/9, by which time the

Redbridge Children's Trust established its own commissioning arrangements. We are very proud of the achievements of the Fund and the ways that it worked collaboratively to show commissioning at its best.

Funded groups and projects included:-

- Redbridge Forum – Children's Advocacy Project
- Refugee and Migrant Forum of East London (RAMFEL) – Children and Family Support Service
- Hear and Now – Young People's Counselling Service
- ELHAP – Play Schemes and Saturday Clubs
- Redbridge Dyslexia Support Group – Early identification in schools project
- Redbridge Action Against Domestic Abuse (RAADA) – Outreach Service
- Step Up – extended telephone helpline, etc
- Barnardo's - Young Carers Project
- Be'yahad Project – Counselling Project
- League of British Muslims – Children's Education and Leisure Centre
- M-Power – Youth Crime Prevention Project
- Victim Support Redbridge – Support to Young Victims of Crime



# Volunteer Centre



RedbridgeCVS took on the role of Volunteer Centre host in November 2006 and ran a full service during 2007/8. We employed a skilled Centre Manager, Liz Walker, who, together with the Volunteer Centre's administrative support and RedbridgeCVS colleagues, started to develop the work into a fully functioning Volunteer Centre, as defined by Volunteering England in their "6 key functions of a Volunteer Centre" – as follows:-

- Brokerage
- Good practice development
- Marketing volunteering
- Developing volunteering opportunities
- Policy response and campaigning
- Strategic development of volunteering

During the year, we were able to deliver the following:

Installation and ongoing administration of VBase (a dedicated volunteering database, which captures data relating to potential volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, facilitating collection of statistical information). There were approximately 10 new referrals each week generated by VBase, which has a live link to the national volunteering website [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk).

- Provision of advice, information and/or referral to over 500 individuals.
- Dedicated interviews and face-to-face advice provision to approx 200 individuals.
- Advertising over 80 opportunities for 44 organisations – with more being added each month.

- Development work with organisations, including LBR Sports and Community Learning and Redbridge Library, to help volunteer coordinators write role descriptions and work on good practice in volunteer management.
- Placement of almost 80 new volunteers, some in multiple roles.
- Production of the Volunteering Opportunities bulletin, enabling information about opportunities to go out to people without internet access. Volunteering Opportunities is distributed to libraries, local college, and volunteer-involving organisations.
- Staging of a Volunteering Fair as part of Make a Difference Week.
- Various talks and information sessions including having a stall at the Employment Fair and holding sessions on pre-retirement courses at Redbridge Institute.
- Organisation of the 'Community Voice' development programme for current and aspiring community representatives.
- Ongoing work with organisations to develop good practice in volunteer management including work on a guidance pack and on training for volunteer coordinators.

RedbridgeCVS continues to develop the Volunteer Centre (despite a setback during 2008/9) and is pleased that an increase in the numbers of people undertaking regular and formal volunteering is one of the new Local Area Agreement targets.

# Information Services

## Deepak Kalha

It was a very good year for the Information Service at RedbridgeCVS. We kept busy and responded to the demands made on us but had time to develop new areas of work. A successful application to Awards for All allowed us to publish a Directory of Voluntary & Community Organisations in Redbridge in the Summer of 2007. It was well received and demand was such that we ran out of directories by the end of the year.

The Community Newsletter continued to be well received with local groups and agencies. We published 11 issues this year, all of which can be accessed via our website [www.redbridgecvcs.net](http://www.redbridgecvcs.net).

The eNews which began in 2006 is now distributed to over 800 groups and individuals. This moved from bi-weekly to weekly because of the demand by readers and contributors. We published 68 issues this year and were able to get news to groups about training, funding, events and issues almost as quickly as they were published. The feedback has been hugely positive.

Our volunteers, as always, have been a vital resource this year. They have helped to maintain the library, collect information for our database, produce newsletters and enews and undertake research on a range of issues that RedbridgeCVS has been involved with.

We dealt with, on average, about 90 enquiries per month this year. These come in the form of phonecalls, emails and visits to the office by groups and individuals. The type of enquiry ranges from information about local

groups and events, to funding sources and training opportunities.

The Information Service lead on the preparations for achieving the renewal of our Investors in People recognition, and successfully built on existing information and resources on monitoring and evaluation. We also began work on achieving the National Association of Voluntary and Community Action Quality Mark which we hope to receive in the Spring of 2009.

The Information Service spent a considerable amount of time this year on overhauling RedbridgeCVS' policies and procedures manual. We will be using these revised policies as models to assist user groups to produce their own.

The Information Service also assisted all staff at RedbridgeCVS with their own projects: helping to brainstorm, develop project ideas, marketing and publicity, monitoring and evaluation tools. We also helped managers to put together a number of successful funding applications.

The Information Service continues to be a vital resource within RedbridgeCVS and a much relied on and accessed service for our user groups and other agencies.



# LEAD in Redbridge

## Aileen Shrimpton

**F**unded by the Learning and Skills Council/ European Social Fund and Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC), the LEAD in Redbridge delivered a highly successful capacity building programme that far exceeded our original contracted targets, outputs and outcomes. This intensive, structured approach to capacity building was not only highly effective but has been recognised as a model of good practice and has now been adopted by the development team of RedbridgeCVS who will mainstream many LEAD activities.

As part of our capacity building programme LEAD in Redbridge developed a genuinely innovative partnership of 32 voluntary sector training providers. The partnership was designed to increase the quality and range of accredited training available to disadvantaged learners in Redbridge. The organisation secured a small amount of funding to develop the model, working closely with ASET, the Open College Network London Region and 4 local training providers. The results were outstanding.

Organisations received intensive support to develop and deliver accredited training programmes leading to almost 200 learners gaining awards and qualifications. Furthermore, this service enabled local organisations to secure new funding in excess of £300,000. This model of delivering accredited training also generated income from other organisations based outside the

borough and to date our fee paying clients have included Greater London Enterprise and the National Workforce Hub.

Although LEAD ended in July 2008, RedbridgeCVS have secured further NLDC funding that will enable us to continue a number of key LEAD themes during 2008/09. Another key component of the LEAD succession strategy is the development of a new project, East Tenders. With support from East London CVS Network, RedbridgeCVS have secured funding from Capacity Builders to develop this new project over the coming years. East Tenders will develop partnerships with Third Sector training providers across East London to deliver learning and skills contracts and we hope local training providers will benefit from this new project.



# RedbridgeCVS Exercise Project

## Liz Pearce

This project started in late 2006 with funding of £33,000 being provided by the Redbridge Primary Care Trust (RPCT) to enable voluntary organisations in the borough to offer their members regular exercise classes. In a good example of partnership working, Redbridge Council assisted the project by helping to find and accredit appropriate trainers.

A range of activities were offered to groups, who were eligible to apply for a course of 20 sessions. The application form was basic and simple to complete, and groups could opt to sign up for 20 weeks of 1 type of activity, or have taster sessions in 3 different areas they felt might interest their members before deciding which activity to pursue for the remainder of their weeks.

The project worked with 32 groups of all ages and abilities, and we estimate that around an average of 750 people per week benefited. Groups included:

- Young People's Project – Kick Boxing
- Redbridge Stroke Club – Chair Based Exercise
- Sikh Community Care Project – Yoga for Women
- Redbridge Panjabi Centre – Yoga for Men
- Young at Heart (Pensioners Group) – Keep Fit
- AWAAZ (Asian Women's Group) – Bhangra Dancing
- Young Inspirations After School Club – Street & Salsa Dancing

At the beginning of the courses, those participating were asked to complete a very



brief questionnaire about how fit they felt. This was repeated at the end of the programme, with an additional question about how likely they were to continue exercising as a result of their experience. The returns have shown that people felt much fitter and healthier, and a the majority wished to continue their activity.

5 groups were offered continuation of their programmes under funding obtained from the Department of Health by the Sikh Community Care Project. This project (Diabetes & Obesity Intervention Programme) is targeting Asian groups and was able to support some of our classes. We also had 4 groups who sent members to a Chair Based Exercise Instructors training programme and qualified to continue running sessions for their groups. This was part funded by the RPCT (through the Exercise Project) and part by the London Borough of Redbridge.

The scheme was wholeheartedly welcomed by the groups who took part. Their only complaint was that it couldn't go on for longer! Here is some of their feedback:

*"They're enjoying it so much, and it's doing so much good. They can't believe it's free!"*

*"The exercises are making so much of a difference to us all. It's great fun and doing us all good."*

*"I can't do everything that the instructor asks, but I do what I can. It's fun; it makes me feel better, and I think that it's making an effort that counts."*

*"One of our members is almost 80, and even the fact that she is now motivated to leave the house and catch a bus once a week to take part.*



# Redbridge Children's Network



## Saffina Masood

We are very pleased to report back on another full, successful and action packed year for the Redbridge Children's Network (RCN). It is with great pride that we highlight just some of the work that we were involved in with the aim of improving the lives of children and young people in Redbridge.

### RCN Meetings

Ten meetings were held during the year, which were well attended. They provided an opportunity for some of our member groups to speak about their services, to further promote their work. Guest speakers were also invited, including colleagues from the statutory sector.

### RCN Newsletter

As always, issues of the newsletter focused on the health of children and young people. Topics included Substance Misuse and a special edition was produced highlighting the work of local groups funded by the Redbridge Children's Fund which came to an end in 07/08. Each edition deals with specific issues affecting local children and young people and has, at its heart, interviews with them which give an opportunity for us to hear their views and voices directly.

### Supporting & Promoting the Voluntary Sector

Part of the role of the RCN is to support and promote the work of its members. To this end, we were delighted to be invited to a number of events during the year organised

by some of the groups with whom we work. The events included 'Fairies & Pirates' Day (Redbridge Forum), Redbridge Faith Forum's AGM, 'Cultural Evening' (Essex Tamil Society), and 'Asian Roots' Launch (Community Development Institute). Attending the events gave us a greater insight into just how much hard work, energy and enthusiasm the voluntary sector puts into its activities for service users. The events were later promoted in the RCN Newsletter to a wider public.

Groups that we directly assisted included Ronakey, Somali Welfare Trust and Muslim Women's Welfare Association, who received help with references, general advice and support.

### Events

*Child Sexual Abuse Conference* – This was a major event that took place at Ilford Town Hall in October 2007. This highly taboo subject was addressed and at the centre of the Conference were children and young people that had been affected by such abuse. They were part of the Conference planning from the earliest stages and were invaluable in the organisation of the event. The Conference was a joint venture by Step Up, Victim Support Redbridge and RedbridgeCVS. A Steering Group made up of voluntary and statutory sector colleagues, including Heads of schools, provided support and advice and helped the event to be a huge success. The legacy of the day was the production of a sensitively produced DVD, entitled, 'Our Journey into the Light' which



was later shown as a way of raising the issue of child sexual abuse with children.

#### *RedbridgeCVS AGM*

The RedbridgeCVS AGM provided a wonderful opportunity to highlight young people in a positive light. Pupils from Chadwell Heath Foundation School spent many months visiting a range of RCN member groups to film some of their activities. These films were then edited by more pupils and the end result shown at the AGM. All the pupils were presented with a Certificate and music vouchers as an appreciation of their hard work. The groups taking part were Redbridge Forum, Essex Tamil Society, Uniting Friends, Melting Pot and Satkar.

#### *Redbridge Parenting Strategy Consultations*

Two workshops were organised (June 2007 and February 2008) to inform the Redbridge Parenting Strategy that RedbridgeCVS was commissioned to draft. Over two dozen interviews with statutory sector colleagues, children, young people, parents and carers were conducted by the Children's Network Development Officer to help inform the document, which was written by the Redbridge Children's Fund Programme Manager, Roger Backhouse.

#### **Voluntary Sector Training**

Some of the courses that were organised for RCN members included:

- Criminal Records Bureau Checks Workshop
- Event Management

- Disability Awareness
- Child Protection
- Self Harm Awareness

#### **Statutory Sector Meetings**

The RCN enjoys a good working relationship with the statutory sector. The Children's Network Development Officer attended a number of meetings throughout the year including:

- Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP)
- Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy
- Safer Communities
- Parent Support Advisers meeting
- Anti Bullying Steering Group
- SEN & Disability Managers meetings
- Ilford Museum (to be part of a DVD on play)

#### **Children's Trust Secondment**

A six months secondment opportunity was presented by the Redbridge Children's Trust to a staff member from the voluntary sector. The Children's Network Development Officer was successfully interviewed and was placed at the Children's Resource Centre North in Manford Way from May to December 2007 for two days per week. This was a unique partnership between the voluntary and statutory sector which provided useful learning opportunities for all sides. The secondment ended with a report with recommendations being written and presented at a Redbridge Children's Trust Management Team meeting.

# Ethnic Minority Mental Health

**Roxanne Keynejad**

2007-2008 saw the start of another new development for RedbridgeCVS – with the hosting of a dedicated Community Development Worker for ethnic minority Mental Health. The post is commissioned by Redbridge PCT and aims to support the Department of Health’s Delivering Race Equality in mental healthcare agenda. This acknowledges that there are additional stressors in the lives of ethnic minority communities which affect their wellbeing, and that NHS services rooted in British culture need to be more sensitive and flexible to serve our ever-changing multi-cultural community.

This year the project has begun by going out into Redbridge and asking community groups what “mental health” means to them, what might stop them accessing services and what services they would like to see provided. Despite the well-known fact that mental health problems can be stigmatised and difficult to talk about, everyone I have spoken to has been open, honest and very generous with their time. Since 1 in 4 of us will experience a mental health problem in the course of a year, this issue is everybody’s business.

As well as a base at RedbridgeCVS, my post is also partly hosted at the new Redbridge Early Intervention Service at Goodmayes Hospital. This multi-disciplinary team works with young people aged 14-35 who are experiencing their first symptoms of a mental health problem and it works with a very ethnically diverse group of clients.

The team is set up to respond to the strong evidence that early intervention by mental health services can significantly improve people’s chances of recovery and their long term outlook, and so mental health awareness and promotion will be key projects for the future.

Many thanks to all of the groups that have participated in the discussion including Ley Street Mental Health Resource Centre, New Commonwealth Asian Women’s Mental Health Project, Hearing Voices group, Melting Pot, Supported Volunteering Service, Awaaz, Redbridge Faith Forum, Mitkadem, Sikh Community Care Project, Ilfomation and countless others.

Achieving ethnic equality in mental health and access to services is a pivotal objective for the future and won’t be achieved overnight. It is a complex issue affected by social deprivation, racism, and inequality on many other levels. Having a workforce of Community Development Workers across the country working with communities to encourage dialogue, openness and understanding is the first step.



# Children's Participation Panel

## Michelle Harris

The Redbridge Children's Fund supported the Children's Participation Panel from July 2003 and was managed by Karen Douglas until her departure in June 2007. Her role was taken by Hayley Shenholds.

Seven primary schools had Children's Advisory Panels which met to discuss topics and carry out work for the Children's Trust. They broadly represented children in the school and were not dominated by the most articulate children. Panels include children who are vulnerable or in some way in need.

The Central Advisory Panel includes children from Year 5 to Year 9 drawn from the seven schools plus children from Children's Fund projects. The Panel meets monthly. Work includes preparing the Participation Project Newsletter and developing training for adults.

The Panel was not all business and hard work, the children did have some time for fun and exploration with visits to the Mayor of London's office, the London Dungeon and playparks throughout the Capital.

The Panel has advised on a range of important topics throughout the year, including:

### Consultation on Play Projects

The children were given an explanation of the play projects and then they were asked to fill in an evaluation sheet, thinking about a play area near where they live or one of the actual play projects. They had a discussion afterwards about what they had done.

### Consultation on Play Partnership

The children were given an explanation of the Play Strategy and what it entails. They also had to think about how play areas in Redbridge can be improved. They were asked their views about how many children/young people should be involved in the Play Partnership and what should be done in the meetings.

### Consultation on Parenting Strategy

The Panel were asked to contribute to the Parenting Strategy produced by RedbridgeCVS for the London Borough of Redbridge. The children were able to input their thoughts on parenting from the recipients viewpoint.

### Youth Parliament

The Panel was visited by members of the Youth Parliament to see how the Panel operated and what the participants thought of it. This was a useful exchange and both groups learnt from each other how to progress their work.

Altogether, this has been a fun but hard-working year for the Panel, some of the children moved on but new members were welcomed at the beginning of the new school year.



# Redbridge Police Community Engagement Group

## Liz Pearce

RedbridgeCVS was approached by the Metropolitan Police Authority during 2007 and asked to assist them in setting up a new Police Community Engagement Group (RPEG) in the Borough. This was to replace the disbanded Police Community Consultative Group.

The Group is intended to help local people engage with the Police, the Council and each other in constructive debate about local policing, crime and community safety. It is funded and supported by the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA). Membership of the group is intended to be representative of the local population, and more particularly, of those groups that interact with the police in disproportionate numbers.

A small steering group was formed which consisted of representatives from the Police, Local Authority and RedbridgeCVS to formulate a proposed constitution for the group and to work up proposals for ensuring adequate representation on the body from the Third Sector.

A first public meeting was held in November 2007 to provide information to the public and the Third Sector on what the role of the body would be, and to encourage nominations for membership of the group. RedbridgeCVS circulated information to local groups and worked with them to ensure that applications were received from groups representative of all sections of the community. 16 places were available (a majority of the group) for the Third Sector, and the steering group had to consider in

the region of 30 applications for these. The organisations selected for membership included a good cross-section of the community, and it was hoped that others who expressed an interest would attend the meetings as well. All of the meetings are to be open to the public and widely advertised. There will also be a future opportunity for other organisations to apply for membership.

Following the successful recruitment of the Third Sector representatives the formal launch of the RPEG was held in March 2008 and attended by around 60 people. RedbridgeCVS were then commissioned by the MPA to provide support to service the new group, and this work forms an ongoing part of the RedbridgeCVS work programme.



# Thank you



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## Annual Report

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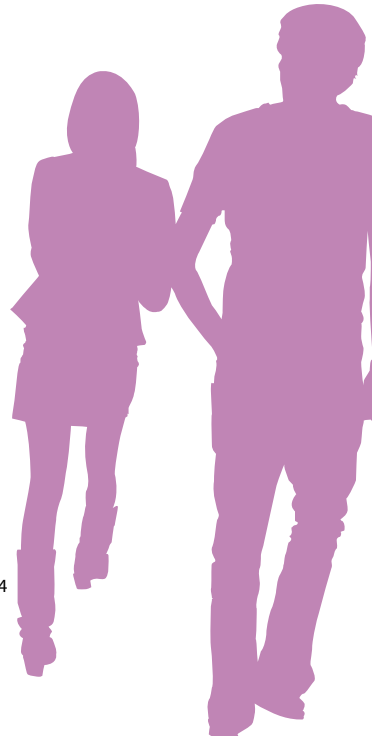
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